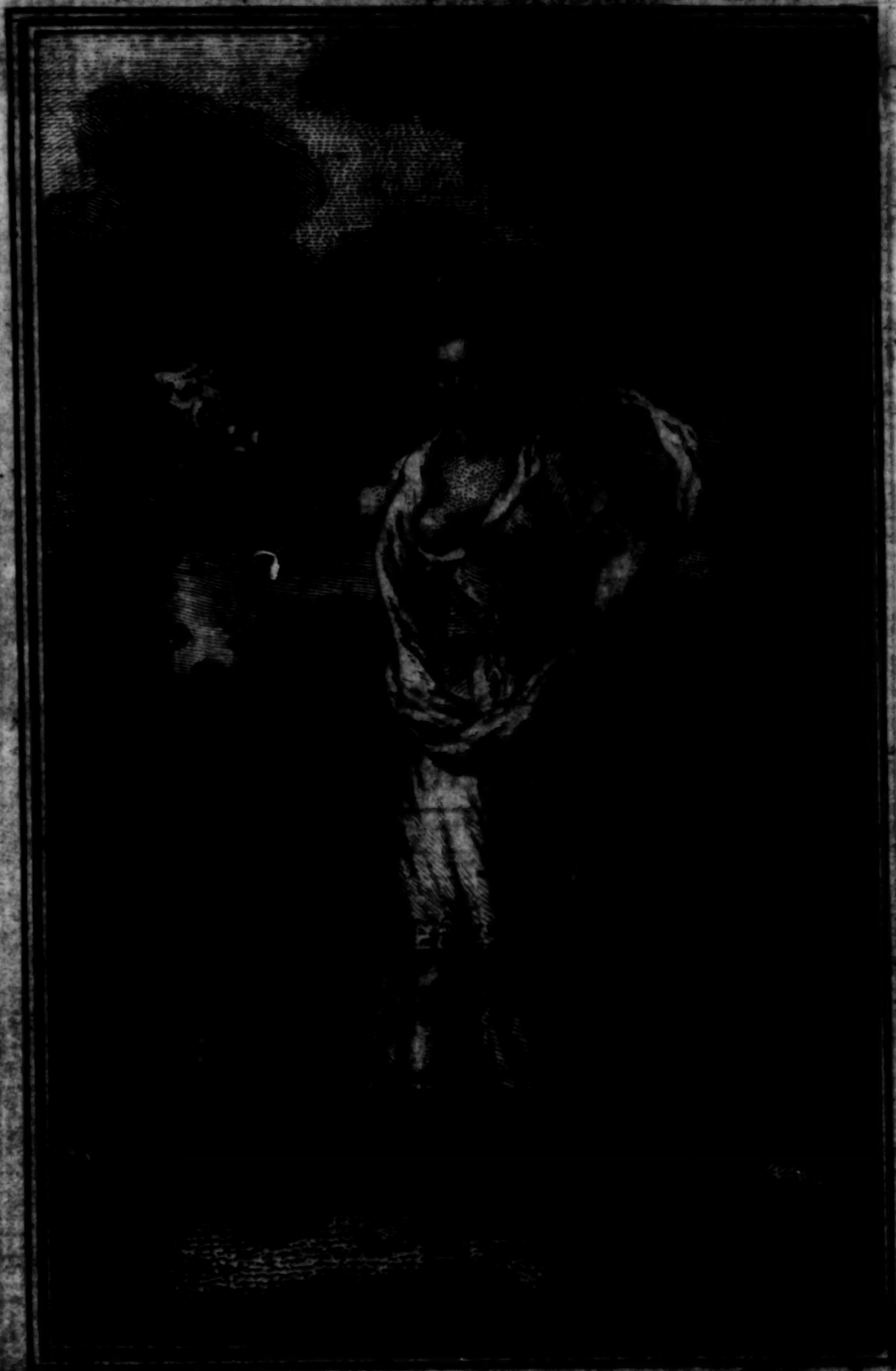




Frontispiece to
The New English Theatre



T H A L I A .

Published June 3^d 1776. by J. Lowndes & other Proprietors.

83 c 19

THE
NEW ENGLISH THEATRE
in

Eight Volumes.
Containing the
MOST VALUABLE PLAYS
which have been
Acted on the London Stage.
VOL. I.

*Busy Body by M^r. Centlivre . . . A Bold Stroke for a Wife by D^r.
Conscious Lovers by Sir Richard Steele,
The Miser by Hen. Fielding Esq. Suspicious Husband D^r. Hoarely.
Revised by M^r. R. Johnson.*

L O N D O N .
*Printed for J. Rivington & Sons, W. Strahan, W. Johnston,
C. Bathurst, J. Davies, J. Davis, J. Dodsley, J. Longman,
J. Lowndes, B. Saw, J. Caston, J. Becket, W. Nicoll,
R. Horsfield, J. Bladon, B. White, E. Dilly, R. Baldwin,
G. Robinson, J. Cadell, W. Flaxman, W. Woodfall & J. Bew, 1776.*

Act III.

BUSY BODY.

Scene 1.



Mr. Woodward in the Character of MARPLOT.
"There he goes."

THE
BUSY BODY.
A
COMEDY,

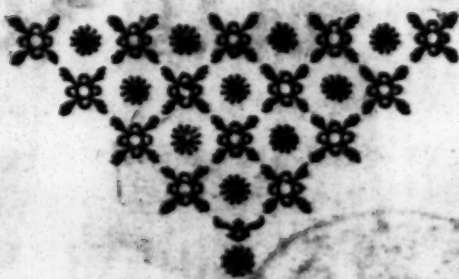
WRITTEN BY
MRS. CENTLIVRE.

As it is now acted at the

Theatre-Royal in Covent-Garden.

QUEM TULIT AD SCENAM VENTOSO GLORIA CURRU,
EXANIMAT LENTUS SPECTATOR, SEDULUS INFLAT.
SIC LEVE, SIC PARVUM EST, ANIMUM QUOD LAUDIS AVARUM
SUBRUIT AUT REFICIT. —

HORAT. EPIST. LIB. II. EP. 1.



L O N D O N.
PRINTED FOR T. LOWNDES, T. CASLON,
W. NICOLL, AND S. BLADON.

M.DCC.LXVI.

The Reader is desired to observe, that the Passages omitted
in the Representation at the Theatres are here preserved, and
marked with inverted Commas; as in Line 13 to 16, in
Page 7.



PROLOGUE, by Mr. BAKER.

THO' modern prophets were expos'd of late,
The Author could not prophesy her fate :
If with such scenes an audience had been fir'd,
The poet must have really been inspir'd.
But these, alas ! are melancholy days
For modern prophets, and for modern plays.
Yet since prophetic lies please fools of fashion,
And women are so fond of agitation ;
To men of sense I'll prophesy a-new,
And tell you wond'rous things, that will prove true :
Undaunted colonels will to camps repair ;
Assur'd there'll be no skirmishes this year ;
On our own terms will flow the wish'd-for peace,
All wars, except 'twixt man and wife, shall cease.
The grand monarch may wish his son a throne,
But hardly will advance to lose his own.
This season most things bear a smiling face ;
But play'rs in summer have a dismal case,
Since your appearance only is our *Act of Grace.*
Court ladies will to country seats be gone,
My lord can't all the year live great in town ;
Where wanting Operas, Ballet, and a Play,
They'll sigh and stitch a gown, to pass the time away.
Gay city wives at *Funbridge* will appear,
Whose husbands long have labour'd for an heir ;
Where many a courtier may their wants relieve,
But by the waters only they conceive.
The Fleet-street sempstresses—*Toast of Temple sparks,*
That runs spruce neckcloths for attornies clerks,
At Cupid's Gardens will her hours regale,
Sing fair Dorinda, and drink bottled ale.
At all assemblies rakes are up and down,
And gamesters, where they think they are not known.
Should I denounce our *Author's* fate to-day,
To cry down prophecies, you'd damn the play ;
Yet whims like these have sometimes made you laugh ;
'Tis rattling all, like *Isaac Bickerstaff.*
Since war and places claim the bards that write,
Be kind, and bear a woman's treat to-night ;
Let your indulgence all her fears allay,
And none but women-haters damn this play.

Dramatis Personæ, 1776.

M E N.

Sir George Airy, a gentleman of four thousand a year, in love with Miranda	At Drury Lane.	Covent Garden.
Sir Francis Gripe, guardian to Miranda and Marplot, father to Charles, in love with Miranda	Mr. SMITH.	Mr. LEWIS.
Charles, friend to Sir George, in love with Isabinda	Mr. YATES.	Mr. QUICK.
Sir Jealous Traffick, a merchant that had lived some time in Spain, father to Isabinda	Mr. BRERETON.	Mr. WROUGHTON.
Marplot, a sort of silly fellow, cowardly, but very inquisitive to know every body's business	Mr. BADDELEY.	Mr. DUNSTALL.
Whisper, servant to Charles	Mr. KING.	Mr. WOODWARD.
	Mr. BURTON.	Mr. CUSHING.

W O M E N.

Miranda, an heiress, worth thirty thousand pounds, really in love with Sir George, but pretends to be so with her guardian Sir Francis	Miss YOUNGE.	Miss MACKLIN.
Isabinda, daughter to Sir Jealous, in love with Charles, but designed for a Spanish merchant by her father	Miss HOPKINS.	Mrs. LESSINGHAM.
Patch, her woman	Mrs. DAVIES.	Mrs. PITT.
Scentwell, woman to Miranda	Mrs. BRADSHAW.	Mrs. POUSSIN.

T H E
B U S Y B O D Y.

A C T I. S C E N E *the Park.*

Sir George Airy meeting Charles.

Cha. **H**A! Sir George Airy! a birding thus early!
What forbidden game rous'd you so soon?
for no lawful occasion could invite a person of your
figure abroad at such unfashionable hours.

Sir Geo. There are some men, Charles, whom fortune
has left free from inquietudes, who are diligently studious
to find out ways and means to make themselves uneasy.

Cha. Is it possible that any thing in nature can ruffle
the temper of a man, whom the four seasons of the year
compliment with as many thousand pounds, nay, and a
father at rest with his ancestors?

Sir Geo. Why there it is now! A man that wants mo-
ney thinks none can be unhappy that has it; but my af-
fairs are in such a whimsical posture, that it will require
a calculation of my nativity to find if my gold will relieve
me or not.

Cha. Ha, ha, ha, never consult the stars about that;
gold has a power beyond them; 'gold unlocks the mid-
'night councils; gold outdoes the wind, becalms the
'ship, or fills her sails; gold is omnipotent below; it
'makes whole armies fight, or fly; it buys even souls,
'and bribes the wretches to betray their country:' Then
what can thy business be, that gold won't serve thee in?

Sir Geo. Why, I'm in love.

Cha. In love!—Ha, ha, ha, ha; in love!—Ha, ha,
ha. With what, pr'ythee? a cherubim?

Sir Geo. No, with a woman.

Cha. A woman! good. Ha, ha, ha; and gold not
help thee!

Sir Geo. But suppose I'm in love with two—

Cha. Ay, if thou'rt in love with two hundred, gold will fetch 'em, I warrant thee, boy. But who are they? who are they? come.

Sir Geo. One is a lady whose face I never saw, but witty as an angel; the other beautiful as Venus—

Cha. And a fool—

Sir Geo. For aught I know, for I never spoke to her; but you can inform me: I am charm'd for the wit of one, and die for the beauty of the other.

Cha. And pray, which are you in quest of now?

Sir Geo. I prefer the sensual pleasure: I'm for her I've seen, who is thy father's ward, Miranda.

Cha. Nay, then I pity you; for the Jew my father will no more part with her and thirty thousand pounds, than he would with a guinea to keep me from starving.

Sir Geo. Now you see gold can't do every thing, Charles.

Cha. Yes, for 'tis her gold that bars my father's gate against you.

Sir Geo. Why, if he is this avaricious wretch, how can'st thou by such a liberal education?

Cha. Not a soure out of his pocket, I assure you: I had an uncle who defrayed that charge; but for some little wildnesses of youth, tho' he made me his heir, left dad my guardian till I came to years of discretion, which I presume the old gentleman will never think I am; and now he has got the estate into his clutches, it does me no more good than if it lay in Prester John's dominions.

Sir Geo. What, can'st thou find no stratagem to redeem it?

Cha. I have made many essays to no purpose; tho' want, the mistress of invention, still tempts me on, yet still the old fox is too cunning for me—I am upon my last project, which, if it fails, then for my last refuge, a brown musquet.

Sir Geo. What is't? Can I assist thee?

Cha. Not yet; when you can, I have confidence enough in you to ask it.

Sir Geo. I am always ready. But what does he intend to do with Miranda? Is she to be sold in private? Or will

will he put her up by way of auction, at who bids most? If so, egad, I'm for him; my gold, as you say, shall be subservient to my pleasure.

Cha. To deal ingenuously with you, Sir George, I know very little of her, or home; for since my uncle's death, and my return from travel, I have never been well with my father; he thinks my expences too great, and I his allowance too little: he never sees me, but he quarrels; and to avoid that, I shun his house as much as possible. The report is, he intends to marry her himself.

Sir Geo. Can she consent to it?

Cha. Yes, faith, so they say; but I tell you, I am wholly ignorant of the matter. 'Miranda and I are like two violent members of a contrary party; I can scarce allow her beauty, tho' all the world does; nor she me civility, for that contempt.' I fancy she plays the mother-in-law already, and sets the old gentleman on to do mischief.

Sir Geo. Then I've your free consent to get her.

Cha. Ay, and my helping hand, if occasion be.

Sir Geo. Poh, yonder's a fool coming this way, let's avoid him.

Cha. What, Marplot? No, no, he's my instrument; there's a thousand conveniences in him; he'll lend me his money when he has any; run of my errands, and he proud on't; in short, he'll pimp for me, lye for me, drink for me, do any thing but fight for me, and that I trust to my own arm for.

Sir Geo. Nay, then he's to be endur'd; I never knew his qualifications before.

Enter Marplot, with a patch cross his face.

Mar. Dear Charles, yours—Ha! Sir George Airy, the man in the world, I have an ambition to be known to. [*Aside.*] Give me thy hand, dear boy—

Cha. A good assurance! But hark ye, how came your beautiful countenance clouded in the wrong place?

Marpl. I must confess 'tis a little *mal-a-propos*; but no matter for that; a word with you, Charles: Pr'ythee, introduce me to Sir George—he is a man of wit, and I'd give ten guineas to—

Cha. When you have 'em, you mean.

Marpl. Ay, when I have 'em; pugh, pox, you cut the thread

thread of my discourse—I would give ten guineas, I say, to be rank'd in his acquaintance: 'Well, 'tis a vast addition to a man's fortune, according to the rout of the world, to be seen in the company of leading men; for then we are all thought to be politicians, or whigs, or jacks, or high fliers, or low fliers, or levellers—and so forth; for you must know, we all herd in parties now.'

Cha. 'Then a fool for diversion is out of fashion, I find.'

Marpl. 'Yes, without it be a mimicking fool; and they are darlings every where; but' pr'ythee introduce me.'

Cha. Well, on condition you'll give us a true account how you come by that mourning nose, I will.

Marpl. I'll do it.

Cha. Sir George, here's a gentleman has a passionate desire to kiss your hand.

Sir Geo. Oh, I honour men of the sword; and I presume this gentleman is lately come from Spain or Portugal—by his scars.

Marpl. No, really, Sir George, mine sprung from civil fury: happening last night into the Groom Porter's—I had a strong inclination to go ten guineas with a sort of a, sort of a—kind of a milk-sop, as I thought: A pox of the dice, he flung out, and my pockets being empty, as Charles knows they often are, he prov'd a surly North Briton, and broke my face for my deficiency.

Sir Geo. Ha! ha! and did not you draw?

Marpl. Draw, Sir! why, I did but lay my hand upon my sword to make a swift retreat, and he roar'd out, "Now the deel a ma sol, Sir, gin ye touch yer steel, Ise whip mine through yer wem."

Sir Geo. Ha, ha, ha!

Cha. Ha, ha, ha, ha, safe was the word: so you walk'd off, I suppose.

Marpl. Yes, for I avoid fighting, to be serviceable to my friends, you know—

Sir Geo. Your friends are much obliged to you, Sir. I hope you'll rank me in that number.

Marpl. Sir George, a bow from the side-box, or to be seen in your chariot, binds me ever yours.

Sir Geo. Trifles! you may command 'em when you please.

Cha.

Cba. Provided he may command you.

Marpl. Me! why I live for no other purpose—Sir George, I have the honour to be caress'd by most of the reigning toasts of the town. I'll tell 'em you are the finest gentleman—

Sir Geo. No, no, pr'ythee let me alone to tell the ladies—my parts—Can you convey a letter upon occasion, or deliver a message with an air of business, ha!

Marpl. With the assurance of a page, and the gravity of a statesman.

Sir Geo. You know Miranda.

Marpl. What, my sister ward? Why, her guardian is mine, we are fellow sufferers: Ah! he is a covetous, cheating, sanctified curmudgeon; that Sir Francis Gripe is a damn'd old —

Cba. I suppose, friend, you forget that he is my father.

Marpl. I ask your pardon, Charles; but it is for your sake I hate him. Well, I say the world is mistaken in him; his out-side piety makes him every man's executor; and his inside cunning makes him every heir's jailor. Egad, Charles, I'm half persuaded that thou'rt some ward too, and never of his getting: for thou art as honest a debauchee as ever cuckolded man of quality.

Sir Geo. A pleasant fellow.

Cba. The dog is diverting sometimes, or there would be no enduring his impertinence: he is pressing to be employed, and willing to execute; but some ill fate generally attends all he undertakes, and he oftener spoils an intrigue than helps it.

Marpl. If I miscarry, 'tis none of my fault: I follow my instructions.

Cba. Yes, witness the merchant's wife.

Marpl. Pish, pox, that was an accident.

Sir Geo. What was it, pr'ythee?

Cba. Why, you must know, I had lent a certain merchant my hunting horses, and was to have met his wife in his absence: sending him along with my groom to make the compliment, and to deliver a letter to the lady at the same time; what does he do, but gives the husband the letter, and offers her the horses.

Marpl. I remember you was even with me, for you deny'd.

10 THE BUSY BODY.

deny'd the letter to be yours, and swore I had a design upon her, which my bones paid for.

Cha. Come, Sir George, let's walk round, if you are not engag'd; for I have sent my man upon a little earnest business, and I have order'd him to bring me the answer into the Park.

Marpl. Business, and I not know it! Egad I'll watch him.

Sir Geo. I must beg your pardon, Charles, I am to meet your father.

Cha. My father!

Sir Geo. Ay! and about the oddest bargain perhaps you ever heard of; but I'll not impart till I know the success.

Marpl. What can his business be with Sir Francis? Now would I give all the world to know it; why the Devil should not one know every man's concern! [*Aside.*

Cha. Prosperity to't whate'er it be; I have private affairs too; over a bottle we'll compare notes.

Marpl. Charles knows I love a glass as well as any man; I'll make one; shall it be to-night? And I long to know their secrets. [*Aside.*

Enter Whisper.

Whisp. Sir, Sir, Mrs. Patch says Isabinda's Spanish father has quite spoil'd the plot, and she can't meet you in the Park; but he infallibly will go out this afternoon, she says; but I must step again to know the hour.

Marpl. What did Whisper say now? I shall go stark mad, if I'm not let into this secret. [*Aside.*

Cha. Curse misfortune! come along with me, my heart feels pleasure at her name. Sir George, yours; we'll meet at the old place the usual hour.

Sir Geo. Agreed; I think I see Sir Francis yonder. [*Exit.*

Cha. Marplot, you must excuse me, I am engag'd. [*Exit.*

Marpl. Engag'd! Egad I'll engage my life I'll know what your engagement is. [*Exit.*

Miran. [*Coming out of a chair.*] Let the chair wait: my servant, that dodg'd Sir George, said he was in the Park.

Enter Patch.

Ha! Miss Patch alone! Did not you tell me you had contriv'd a way to bring Isabinda to the Park?

Patch. Oh, madam, your ladyship can't imagine what a wretched

a wretched disappointment we have met with: just as I had fetched a suit of my clothes for disguise, comes my old master into his closet, which is right against her chamber door; this struck us into a terrible fright—At length I put on a grave face, and asked him if he was at leisure for his chocolate, in hopes to draw him out of his hole; but he snap'd my nose off; No, I shall be busy here these two hours. At which, my poor mistress, seeing no way of escape, ordered me to wait on your ladyship with the sad relation.

Miran. Unhappy Isabinda! Was ever any thing so unaccountable as the humour of Sir Jealous Traffick!

Patch. Oh, Madam, 'tis his living so long in Spain; he vows he'll spend half his estate, but he'll be a parliament-man, on purpose to bring in a bill for women to wear veils, and the other odious Spanish customs—He swears it is the height of impudence to have a woman seen bare-fac'd even at church, and scarce believes there's a true begotten child in the city.

Miran. Ha, ha, ha, how the old fool torments himself! Suppose he could introduce his rigid rules—Does he think we could not match them in contrivance? No, no, let the tyrant man make what laws he will, if there's a woman under the government, I warrant she finds a way to break 'em: is his mind set upon the Spaniard for his son-in-law still?

Patch. Ay, and he expects him by the next fleet, which drives his daughter to melancholy and despair: but, Madam, I find you retain the same gay, chearful spirit you had, when I waited on your ladyship—My lady is mighty good-humour'd, too: and I have found a way to make Sir Jealous believe I am wholly in his interest, when my real design is to serve her; he makes me her jailor, and I set her at liberty.

Miran. I knew thy prolific brain would be of singular service to her, or I had not parted with thee to her father.

Patch. But, Madam, the report is, that you are going to marry your guardian.

Miran. It is necessary such a report should be, Patch.

Patch. But is it true, Madam?

Miran. That's not absolutely necessary.

Patch. I thought it was only the old strain, coaxing him still for your own, and railing at all the young fellows about town: in my mind, now, you are as ill plagu'd with your guardian, Madam, as my lady is with her father.

Miran. No, I have liberty, wench; that she wants; what would she give now to be in this *deshabillée*, in the—open air; nay, more, in pursuit of the young fellow she likes? for that's my case, I assure you.

Patch. As for that, Madam, she's even with you; for though she can't come abroad, we have a way to bring him home, in spite of old Argus.

Miran. Now, Patch, your opinion of my choice, for here he comes—Ha! my guardian with him! What can be the meaning of this? I'm sure Sir Francis can't know me in this dress—Let's observe 'em. [*They withdraw.*]

Enter Sir Francis Gripe and Sir George Airy.

Sir Fran. Verily, Sir George, thou wilt repent throwing away thy money so; for I tell thee sincerely, Miranda, my charge, does not love a young fellow: they are all vicious, and seldom make good husbands: in sober sadness she cannot abide 'em.

Miran. [*Peeping.*] In sober sadness you are mistaken—What can this mean?

Sir Geo. Look ye, Sir Francis, whether she can or cannot abide young fellows, is not the business: Will you take the fifty guineas?

Sir Fran. In good truth, I will not—for I knew thy father, he was a hearty wary man, and I cannot consent that his son should squander away, what he sav'd, to no purpose.

Miran. [*Peeping.*] Now in the name of wonder, what bargain can he be driving about me for fifty guineas?

Patch. I wish it ben't for the first night's lodging, Madam.

Sir Geo. Well, Sir Francis, since you are so conscientious for my father's sake, then permit me the favour *gratis*.

Miran. [*Peeping.*] The favour! O' my life, I believe 'tis as you said, Patch.

Sir Fran. No, verily, if thou dost not buy thy experience, thou wilt never be wise; therefore give me a hundred, and try fortune.

Sir Geo. The scruples arose, I find, from the scanty sum—

sum—Let me see—a hundred guineas—*[Takes 'em out of a purse, and chinks 'em.]* Ha! they have a very pretty sound, and a very pleasing look—But then, Miranda—But if she should be cruel—

Miran. [Peeping.] As ten to one I shall—

Sir Fran. Ay, do consider on't. He, he, he, he!

Sir Geo. No, I'll do't.

Patch. Do't! what, whether you will or no, Madam?

Sir Geo. Come, to the point; here's the gold, sum up the conditions—

Sir Fran. [Pulling out a paper.]

Miran. [Peeping.] Ay, for heaven's sake do, for my expectation is on the rack.

Sir Fran. Well, at your peril be it.

Sir Geo. Ay, ay, go on.

Sir Fran. Imprimis, you are to be admitted into my house, in order to move your suit to Miranda, for the space of ten minutes, without lett or molestation, provided I remain in the same room.

Sir Geo. But out of ear-shot.

Sir Fran. Well, well, I don't desire to hear what you say; Ha, ha, ha, in consideration I am to have that purse and a hundred guineas.

Sir Geo. Take it—

[Gives him the purse.]

Miran. [Peeping.] So, 'tis well it's no worse; I'll fit you both—

Sir Geo. And this agreement is to be perform'd to-day.

Sir Fran. Ay, ay, the sooner the better. Poor fool, how Miranda and I shall laugh at him—Well, Sir George, ha, ha, ha, take the last sound of your guineas, Ha, ha, ha.

[Chinks them.]

[Exit.]

Miran. [Peeping.] Sure he does not know I am Miranda.

Sir Geo. A very extraordinary bargain I have made, truly, if she should be really in love with this old cuff, now—Psha, that's morally impossible—But then what hopes have I to succeed? I never spoke to her—

Miran. [Peeping.] Say you so? Then I'm safe.

Sir Geo. What tho' my tongue never spoke, my eyes said a thousand things, and my hopes flattered me her's answer'd 'em. If I'm lucky—if not, it is but a hundred guineas thrown away.

[Miranda]

[*Miranda and Patch come forward.*]

Miran. Upon what, Sir George?

Sir Geo. Ha! my *incognita*—upon a woman, Madam.

Miran. They are the worst things you can deal in, and damage the soonest; your very breath destroys 'em, and I fear you'll never see your return, Sir George, ha, ha.

Sir Geo. Were they more brittle than china, and dropped to pieces with a touch, every atom of her I have ventur'd at, if she is but mistress of thy wit, balances ten times the sum—Pr'ythee let me see thy face.

Miran. By no means; that may spoil your opinion of my sense—

Sir Geo. Rather confirm it, Madam.

Patch. So rob the lady of your gallantry, Sir.

Sir Geo. No, child, a dish of chocolate in the morning never spoils my dinner; the other lady, I design a set meal; so there's no danger.—

Miran. Matrimony! ha, ha, ha! What crimes have you committed against the god of love, that he should revenge 'em so severely, to stamp husband upon your forehead?

Sir Geo. For my folly, in having so often met you here, without pursuing the laws of nature, and exercising her command—But I resolve, ere we part now, to know who you are, where you live, and what kind of flesh and blood your face is; therefore unmask, and don't put me to the trouble of doing it for you.

Miran. My face is the same flesh and blood with my hand, Sir George, which if you'll be so rude to provoke—

Sir Geo. You'll apply it to my cheek—The ladies favours are always welcome; but I must have that cloud withdrawn. [*Taking hold of her.*] Remember you are in the Park, child; and what a terrible thing would it be to lose this pretty white hand?

Miran. And how will it sound in a chocolate-house, that Sir George Airy rudely pull'd off a lady's mask when he had given her his honour that he never would, directly nor indirectly, endeavour to know her till she gave him leave?

Patch. I wish we were safe out.'

Sir Geo. But if that lady thinks fit to pursue and meet me

me at every turn, like some troubled spirit, shall I be blam'd if I inquire into the reality? I would have nothing dissatisfied in a female shape.

Miran. What shall I do? [Pauses.]

Sir Geo. Ay, pr'ythee consider, for thou shalt find me very much at thy service.

Patch. Suppose, Sir, the lady should be in lovewith you.

Sir Geo. Oh! I'll return the obligation in a moment.

Patch. And marry her?

Sir Geo. Ha, ha, ha, that's not the way to love her, child.

Miran. If he discovers me, I shall die—Which way shall I escape?—Let me see. [Pauses.]

Sir Geo. Well, Madam—

Miran. I have it—Sir George, 'tis fit you should allow something; if you'll excuse my face, and turn your back (if you look upon me, I shall sink, even mask'd as I am) I will confess why I have engaged you so often, who I am, and where I live.

Sir Geo. Well, to shew you I am a man of honour, I accept the conditions. Let me but once know those, and the face won't be long a secret to me.

Patch. What mean you, Madam?

Miran. To get off.

Sir Geo. 'Tis something indecent to turn one's back upon a lady; but you command, and I obey. [Turns his back.] Come, Madam, begin—

Miran. First then it was my unhappy lot to see you at Paris, [Draws back a little while, and speaks] at a ball upon a birth-day; your shape and air charm'd my eyes; your wit and complaisance my soul; and from that fatal night I lov'd you. [Drawing back.]

And when you left the place, grief seiz'd me so,

No rest my heart, no sleep my eyes could know.

Last, I resolv'd a hazardous point to try,

And quit the place in search of liberty. [Exit.]

Sir Geo. Excellent—I hope she's handsome—Well, now, Madam, to the other two things: your name, and where you live?—I am a gentleman, and this confession will not be lost upon me.—Nay, pr'ythee don't weep, but go on—for I find my heart melts in thy behalf—
speak

Speak quickly, or I shall turn about—Not yet—Poor lady, she expects I should comfort her; and to do her justice, she has said enough to encourage me. [*Turns about.*] Ha! gone! the devil, jilted! Why what a tale has she invented—of Paris, balls, and birth-days!—Egad I'd give ten guineas to know who the gipsy is—A curse of my folly—I deserve to lose her: what woman can forgive a man that turns his back!

*The bold and resolute in love and war,
To conquer, take the right and swiftest way:
The boldest lover soonest gains the Fair,
As courage makes the rudest force obey.
Take no denial, and the dames adore ye,
Closely pursue them, and they fall before ye.*

The End of the FIRST ACT.

ACT II. SCENE Sir Francis Gripe's House.

Enter Sir Francis Gripe and Miranda.

Sir Fran. HA, ha, ha, ha, ha!

Miran. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! Oh, I shall die with laughing—The most romantic adventure—Ha, ha, ha! What does the odious young fop mean? A hundred pieces to talk ten minutes with me; ha, ha, ha!

Sir Fran. And I am to be by too, there's the jest: Adod, if it had been in private, I should not have car'd to trust the young dog.

Miran. Indeed and indeed, but you might, Gardy—Now methinks there's nobody handsomer than you: So neat, so clean, so good-humour'd, and so loving—

Sir Fran. Pretty rogue, pretty rogue; and so thou shalt find me, if thou dost prefer thy Gardy before these caperers of the age; thou shalt out-shine the Queen's box on an opera night; thou shalt be the envy of the ring (for I will carry thee to Hyde-Park) and thy equipage shall surpass the what d'ye call 'em ambassador's.

Miran. Nay, I am sure the discreet part of my sex will envy me more for the inside furniture, when you are in it, than my outside equipage.

Sir Fran.

Sir Fran. A cunning baggage i'faith thou art, and a wise one too; and to shew thee thou hast not chosen amiss, I'll this moment disinherit my son, and settle my whole estate upon thee.

Miran. There's an old rogue now: [*Afide.*] No, Gardy, I would not have your name be so black in the world—You know my father's will runs, that I am not to possess my estate, without your consent, till I am five-and-twenty; you shall only abate the odd seven years, and make me mistress of my estate to-day, and I'll make you master of my person to-morrow.

Sir Fran. Humph! that may not be safe—No, Chargy, I'll settle it upon thee for pin-money; and that will be every bit as well, thou know'st.

Miran. Unconscionable old wretch! bribe me with my own money!—Which way shall I get out of his hands!— [*Afide.*]

Sir Fran. Well, what art thou thinking on, my girl, ha? how to banter Sir George?

Miran. I must not pretend to banter: he knows my tongue too well: [*Afide.*] No, Gardy, I have thought of a way that will confound him more than all I could say, if I should talk to him seven years.

Sir Fran. How's that? Oh! I'm transported, I'm ravish'd, I'm mad—

Miran. It would make you mad if you knew all: [*Afide.*] I'll not answer him a word, but be dumb to all he says—

Sir Fran. Dumb! good; Ha, ha, ha! Excellent, ha, ha! I think I have you now, Sir George; dumb! he'll go distracted—Well, she's the wittiest rogue.—Ha, ha, dumb! I can but laugh, ha, ha! to think how damn'd mad he'll be, when he finds he has given his money away for a dumb show. Ha, ha, ha!

Miran. Nay, Gardy, if he did but know my thoughts of him, it would make him ten times madder: Ha, ha, ha!

Sir Fran. Ay, so it would, Chargy, to hold him in such derision, to scorn to answer him, to be dumb! Ha, ha, ha!

Enter

Enter Charles.

Sir Fran. How now, sirrah! Who let you in?

Cha. My necessities, Sir.

Sir Fran. Sir, your necessities are very impertinent, and ought to have sent before they entered.

Cha. Sir, I knew 'twas a word would gain admittance no where.

Sir Fran. Then, sirrah, how durst you rudely thrust that upon your father, which nobody else would admit?

Cha. Sure the name of a son is a sufficient plea. I ask this lady's pardon, if I have intruded.

Sir Fran. Ay, ay, ask her pardon and her blessing too, if you expect any thing from me.

Miran. I believe yours, Sir Francis, in a purse of guineas, would be more material. Your son may have business with you. I'll retire.

Sir Fran. I guess his business, but I'll dispatch him; I expect the knight every minute: you'll be in readiness?

Miran. Certainly! My expectation is more upon the wing than yours, old gentleman. [Exit.

Sir Fran. Well, Sir!

Cha. Nay, it is very ill, Sir; my circumstances are, I assure you, very ill.

Sir Fran. And what's that to me, Sir? Your management should have made them better.

Cha. If you please to intrust me with the management of my estate, I shall endeavour it, Sir.

Sir Fran. What to set upon a earth, and buy a lady's favours at the price of a thousand pieces, to rig out an equipage for a wench, or by your carelessness enrich your steward, to fine for sheriff, or put up for parliament-man?

Cha. I hope I should not spend it this way: However, I ask only for what my uncle left me; yours you may dispose of as you please, Sir.

Sir Fran. That I shall, out of your reach, I assure you, Sir. Adod these young fellows think old men get estates for nothing but them to squander away, in dicing, wenching, drinking, dressing, and so forth.

Cha.

Cha. I think I was born a gentleman, Sir! I'm sure my uncle bred me like one.

Sir Fran. From which you would infer, Sir, that gaming, whoring, and the pox, are requisites to a gentleman.

Cha. Monstrous! When I would ask him only for a support, he falls into these unmannerly reproaches; I must, tho' against my will, employ invention, and by stratagem relieve myself. *[Aside.]*

Sir Fran. Sirrah, what is it you mutter, sirrah, ha? *[Holds up his cane.]* I say you shan't have a groat out of my hands till I please—and may be I'll never please, and what's that to you?

Cha. Nay, to be robb'd, or to have one's throat cut, is not much.

Sir Fran. What's that, sirrah? Would ye rob me, or cut my throat, ye rogue?

Cha. Heaven forbid, Sir—I said no such thing.

Sir Fran. Mercy on me! What a plague it is to have a son of one and twenty, who wants to elbow one out of one's life, to edge himself into the estate!

Enter Marplot.

Marpl. Egad he's here—I was afraid I had lost him: His secret could not be with his father, his wants are public there—Guardian—your servant, Charles. I know by that sorrowful countenance of thine, the old man's fist is as close as his strong box.—But I'll help thee.

Sir Fran. So: here's another extravagant coxcomb, that will spend his fortune before he comes to't; but he shall pay swinging interest, and so let the fool go on—Well, what does necessity bring you too, Sir?

Marpl. You have hit it, Guardian.—I want a hundred pounds.

Sir Fran. For what?

Marpl. Pogh, for a hundred things: I can't for my life tell you for what.

Cha. Sir, I suppose I have received all the answer I am like to have.

Marpl. Oh, the devil, if he gets out before me, I shall lose him again.

Sir Fran. Ay, Sir, and you may be marching as soon

soon as you please—I must see a change in your temper ere you find one in mine.

Marpl. Pray, Sir, dispatch me; the money, Sir; I'm in mighty haste.

Sir Fran. Fool, take this, and go to the cashier, I shan't be long plagu'd with thee. [*Gives him a note.*]

Marpl. Devil take the cashier, I shall certainly have Charles gone before I come back again. [*Runs out.*]

Cha. Well, Sir, I take my leave—But remember, you expose an only son to all the miseries of wretched poverty, which too often lays the plan for scenes of mischief.

Sir Fran. Stay, Charles, I have a sudden thought come into my head, may prove to thy advantage.

Cha. Ha, does he relent? [*Aside.*]

Sir Fran. My Lady Wrinkle, worth forty thousand pounds, sets up for a handsome young husband; she prais'd thee t'other day; tho' the match-makers can get twenty guineas for a sight of her, I can introduce thee for nothing.

Cha. My Lady Wrinkle, Sir! why she has but one eye.

Sir Fran. Then she'll see but half your extravagance, Sir.

Cha. Condemn me to such a piece of deformity! Toothless! dirty, wry-neck'd, hunch-back'd hag!

Sir Fran. Hunch-back'd! so much the better, then, she has a rest for her misfortunes; for thou wilt load her swingingly. Now I warrant you think, this is no offer of a father: forty thousand pounds is nothing with you.

Cha. Yes, Sir, I think it is too much: a young beautiful woman with half the money would be more agreeable.—I thank you, Sir; but you chose better for yourself, I find.

Sir Fran. Out of my doors, you dog; you pretend to meddle with my marriage, firrah!

Cha. Sir, I obey.—

Sir Fran. But me no buts—Be gone, Sir: dare to ask me for money again—Refuse forty thousand pounds! Out of my doors, I say, without reply. [*Exit Cha.*]

Enter Servant.

Serv. One Sir George Airy enquires for you, Sir. *Enter*

Enter Marplot running.

Marpl. Ha! gone! Is Charles gone, Guardian?

Sir Fran. Yes; and I desire your wise worship to walk after him.

Marpl. Nay, egad, I shall run, I tell you but that. Ah, pox of this cashier for detaining me so long: where the devil shall I find him now? I shall certainly lose this secret. *[Exit hastily.]*

Sir Fran. What is the fellow distracted?—Desire Sir George to walk up.—Now for a trial of skill that will make me happy, and him a fool: ha, ha, ha! in my mind he looks like an ass already.

Enter Sir George.

Sir Fran. Well, Sir George, do you hold in the same mind, or would you capitulate? ha, ha, ha! look, here are the guineas. *[Ghinks 'em.]* Ha, ha, ha!

Sir Geo. Not if they were twice the sum, Sir Francis: therefore be brief, call in the lady, and take your post.—If she's a woman, and not seduced by witchcraft to this old rogue, I'll make his heart ache; for if she has but one grain of inclination about her, I'll vary a thousand shapes but find it. *[Aside.]*

Enter Miranda.

Sir Fran. Agreed—Miranda! there, Sir George, try your fortune. *[Takes out his watch.]*

Sir Geo. So from the eastern chambers breaks the sun,
Dispels the clouds, and gilds the vales below. *[Salutes her.]*

Sir Fran. Hold, Sir, kissing was not in our agreement.

Sir Geo. Oh! that's by way of prologue: pr'ythee, old mammon, to thy post.

Sir Fran. Well, young Timon, 'tis now four exactly; ten minutes, remember, is your utmost limit, not a minute more. *[Retires to the bottom of the stage.]*

Sir Geo. Madam, whether you'll excuse or blame my love, the author of this rash proceeding, depends upon your pleasure, as also the life of your admirer: your sparkling eyes speak a heart susceptible of love; your vivacity, a soul too delicate to admit the embraces of decayed mortality.

Miran.

Miran. [*Aside.*] Oh! that I durst speak —

Sir Geo. Shake off this tyrant Guardian's yoke, assume yourself, and dash his bold aspiring hopes; the deity of his desires is avarice; a heretic in love, and ought to be banish'd by the queen of beauty. See, Madam, a faithful servant kneels, and begs to be admitted in the number of your slaves. [*Miranda gives him her hand to raise him.*]

Sir Fran. I wish I could hear what he says now. [*Running up.*] Hold, hold, hold, no palming, that's contrary to articles —

Sir Geo. 'Sdeath, Sir, keep your distance, or I'll write another article in your guts. [*Lays his hand to his sword.*]

Sir Fran. [*Going back.*] A bloody-minded fellow! —

Sir Geo. Not answer me! perhaps she thinks my address too grave: I'll be more free — Can you be so un-consoionable, Madam, to let me say all these fine things to you without one single compliment in return? View me well; am I not a proper handsome fellow, ha? Can you prefer that old, dry, withered, sapless log of sixty-five, to the vigorous, gay, sprightly love of twenty-four? With snoring only he'll awake thee; but I, with ravishing delight, would make thy senses dance in concert with the joyful minutes. — Ha! not yet? Sure she is dumb — Thus would I steal and touch thy beauteous hand, [*Takes hold of her hand*] till by degrees I reach'd thy snowy breasts, then ravish kisses thus.

[*Embraces her in ecstasy.*]

Miran. [*Struggles and flings from him.*] O heavens! I shall not be able to contain myself. [*Aside.*]

Sir Fran. [*Running up, with his watch in his hand.*] Sure she did not speak to him — There's five of the ten minutes gone, Sir George — Adod, I don't like those close conferences —

Sir Geo. More interruptions — you shall have it, Sir!

[*Lays his hand to his sword.*]

Sir Fran. [*Going back.*] No, no, you shan't have her neither. [*Aside.*]

Sir Geo. Dumb still — Sure this old dog has enjoin'd her silence; I'll try another way — I must conclude, Madam, that in compliance to your Guardian's humour,
you

you refuse to answer me—Consider the injustice of his injunction, Madam: these ten minutes cost me a hundred pound—and would you answer me, I could purchase the whole day so. However, Madam, you must give me leave to make the best interpretation I can for my money, and take the indication of your silence for the secret liking of my person: therefore, Madam, I will instruct you how to keep your word inviolate to Sir Francis, and yet answer me to every question: As for example, when I ask any thing to which you would reply in the affirmative, gently nod your head—thus; and when in the negative, thus; [*Shakes his head.*] and in the doubtful, a tender sigh, thus. [*Sighs.*]

Miran. How every action charms me—but I'll fit him for signs, I warrant him. [*Aside.*]

Sir Fran. Ha, ha, ha! poor Sir George, ha, ha, ha! [*Aside.*]

Sir Geo. Was it by his desire that you are dumb, Madam, to all that I can say?

Miran. [*Nods.*]

Sir Geo. Very well! she's tractable, I find—And is it possible that you can love him! [*Miran. nods.*] Miraculous! Pardon the bluntness of my questions, for my time is short. May I not hope to supplant him in your esteem? [*Miran. sighs.*] Good, she answers me as I could wish—You'll not consent to marry him then? [*Miran. sighs.*] How! doubtful in that?—Undone again—Humph! but that may proceed from his power to keep her out of her estate till twenty-five; I'll try that—Come, Madam, I cannot think you hesitate on this affair out of any motive but your fortune—Let him keep it till those few years are expired; make me happy with your person, let him enjoy your wealth—
[*Miran. holds up her hands.*] Why, what sign is that now? Nay, nay, Madam, except you observe my lesson, I can't understand your meaning.

Sir Fran. What a vengeance, are they talking by signs! Had I may be fool'd here; what do you mean, Sir George?

Sir Geo. To cut your throat, if you dare mutter another syllable.

Sir Fran. Od! I wish he were fairly out of my house.

Sir Geo. Pray, Madam, will you answer me to the purpose? [*Miran. shakes her head, and points to Sir Francis.*] What does she mean! she won't answer me to the purpose, or is she afraid you old cuss should understand her signs?—Ay, it must be that; I perceive, Madam, you are too apprehensive of the promise you have made to follow my rules; therefore I'll suppose your mind, and answer for you—First, for myself, Madam, that I am in love with you is an infallible truth. Now for you: [*Turns on her side.*] Indeed, Sir, and may I believe it?—As certainly, Madam, as that 'tis daylight, or that I die if you persist in silence—Bless me with the music of your voice, and raise my spirits to their proper heaven: thus low let me intreat, ere I'm oblig'd to quit this place, grant me some token of a favourable reception to keep my hopes alive. [*Arises hastily, turns on her side.*] Rise, Sir; and since my Guardian's presence will not allow me privilege of tongue, read that, and rest assured you are not indifferent to me. [*Offers her a letter.*] Ha, right woman! But [*she strikes it down*] no matter, I'll go on.

Sir Fran. Ha! what's that! a letter!—Ha, ha, ha! thou art baulk'd.

Miran. The best assurance I ever saw.—— [*Aside.*

Sir Geo. Ha! a letter! Oh! let me kiss it with the same raptures that I would do the dear hand that touch'd it. [*Opens it.*] Now for a quick fancy, and a long *extempore*——What's here? [*Reads.*] “Dear Sir George; “this virgin muse I consecrate to you, which, when it “has received the addition of your voice, will charm “me into a desire of liberty to love; which you, and “only you, can fix.” My angel! Oh you transport me! [*Kisses the letter.*] “And see the power of your “command; the God of love has set the verse already; “the flowing numbers dance into a tune, and I'm inspired with a voice to sing it.”

Miran. I'm sure thou art inspired with impudence enough. [*Aside.*

Sir Geo. [*Sings.*] Great

Great love inspire him;

Say I admire him.

Give me the lover

That can discover

Secret devotion

From silent motion;

Then don't betray me,

But hence convey me.

Sir Geo. [*Taking hold of Miranda.*] With all my heart, this moment let's retire. [*Sir Francis coming up*
[*bastily.*

Sir Fran. The time is expir'd, Sir, and you must take your leave. There, my girl, there's the hundred pounds, which thou hast won; go, I'll be with you presently, ha, ha, ha, ha! [*Exit Miranda.*

Sir Geo. Ads-heart, Madam, you won't leave me just in the nick, will you?

Sir Fran. Ha, ha, ha! she has nick'd you, Sir George, I think, ha, ha, ha! Have you any more hundred pounds to throw away upon courtship? ha, ha, ha!

Sir Geo. He, he, he, he! A curse of your fleering jests—Yet, however ill I succeeded, I'll venture the same wager, she does not value thee a spoonful of snuff;—Nay, more, though you enjoin'd her silence to me, you'll never make her speak to the purpose with yourself.

Sir Fran. Ha, ha, ha! did not I tell thee thou would'st repent thy money? Did not I say, she hated young fellows? ha, ha, ha!

Sir Geo. And I'm positive she's not in love with age.

Sir Fran. Ha, ha! no matter for that, ha, ha! she's not taken with your youth, nor your rhetoric to boot; ha, ha!

Sir Geo. Whate'er her reasons are for disliking of me, I am certain she can be taken with nothing about thee.

Sir Fran. Ha, ha, ha! how he swells with envy!—poor man, poor man—ha, ha, ha! I must beg your pardon, Sir George; Miranda will be impatient to have her share of mirth: verily we shall laugh at thee most egregiously. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir Geo. With all my heart, faith—I shall laugh in my turn too—For if you dare marry her, old Belzebub, you

will be cuckolded most egregiously : remember that, and tremble —

- ' *She that to age her beauteous self resigns,*
- ' *Shews witty management for close designs.*
- ' *Then if thou'rt grac'd with fair Miranda's bed,*
- ' *Actæon's horns she means shall crown thy head.* [Exit.]
- ' *Sir Fran.* Ha, ha, ha ! he is mad.
- ' *These fluttering fops imagine they can wind,*
- ' *Turn, and decoy to love all woman-kind :*
- ' *But here's a proof of wisdom in my charge,*
- ' *Old men are constant, young men live at large ;*
- ' *The frugal hand can bills at sight defray,*
- ' *When he that lavish is, has nought to pay.* [Exit.]

SCENE changes to Sir Jealous Traffick's House.

Enter Sir Jealous, Isabinda, Patch following.

Sir Jea. What, in the balcony again ? notwithstanding my positive commands to the contrary ! — Why don't you write a bill on your forehead, to show passengers there's something to be lett ? —

Isab. What harm can there be in a little fresh air, Sir ?

Sir Jea. Is your constitution so hot, mistress, that it wants cooling, ha ? Apply the virtuous Spanish rules, banish your taste, and thoughts of flesh, feed upon roots, and quench your thirst with water.

Isab. That and a close room would certainly make me die of the vapours.

Sir Jea. No, mistress, 'tis your high-fed, lusty, rambling, rampant ladies—that are troubled with the vapours : 'tis your ratifia, perfico, cinnamon, citron, and spirit of clary, cause such swi—m—ing in the brain, that carries many a guinea full-tide to the doctor. But you are not to be bred this way ; no galloping abroad, no receiving visits at home ; for in our loose country, the women are as dangerous as the men.

Patch. So I told her, Sir ; and that it was not decent to be seen in a balcony—but she threatened to slap my chaps, and told me, I was her servant, not her governor.

Sir Jea. Did she so ? but I'll make her to know that you are her *duenna* : Oh that incomparable custom of Spain !

Spain! Why here's no depending upon old women in my country—for they are as wanton at eighty, as a girl of eighteen; and a man may as safely trust to Asgil's translation, as to his great grandmother's not marrying again.

Isab. Or to the Spanish ladies veils and *duennas*, for the safeguard of their honour.

Sir Jea. Dare to ridicule the cautious conduct of that wise nation, and I'll have you lockt up this fortnight without a peep-hole.

Isab. If we had but the ghostly helps in England, which they have in Spain, I might deceive you if you did—'Sir, 'tis not the restraint, but the innate principles, secures the reputation and honour of our sex.' Let me tell you, Sir, confinement sharpens the invention, as want of sight strengthens the other senses, and is often more pernicious, than the recreation that innocent liberty allows.

Sir Jea. Say you so, mistress? who the devil taught you the art of reasoning? I assure you they must have a greater faith than I pretend to, that can think any woman innocent who requires liberty. Therefore, Patch, to your charge I give her; lock her up till I come back from 'Change: I shall have some sauntering coxcomb, with nothing but a red coat and a feather, think, by leaping into her arms, to leap into my estate—but I'll prevent them: she shall be only Signior Babinetto's.

Patch. Really, Sir, I wish you would employ any body else in this affair; I lead a life like a dog, with obeying your commands. Come, Madam, will you please to be locked up?

Isab. Ay, to enjoy more freedom than he is aware of. [*Afide.*]

[*Exit with Patch.*]

Sir Jea. I believe this wench is very true to my interest: I am happy I met with her, if I can but keep my daughter from being blown upon 'till Signior Babinetto arrives, who shall marry her as soon as he comes, and carry her to Spain as soon as he has married her. She has a pregnant wit, and I'd no more have her an English wife, than the Grand Signior's mistress.

[*Exit.*]

B 2

Enter

Enter Whisper.

Whisp. So, I saw Sir Jealous go out; where shall I find Mrs. Patch now?

Enter Patch.

Patch. Oh, Mr. Whisper! my lady saw you out at the window, and ordered me to bid you fly, and let your master know she's now alone.

Whisp. Hush, speak softly; I go, I go: But bark ye, Mrs. Patch, shall not you and I have a little confabulation, when my master and your lady are engag'd?

Patch. Ay, ay; farewell. [*Goes in and shuts the door.*]

Re-enter Sir Jealous Traffic, meeting Whisper.

Sir Jea. Sure whilst I was talking with Mr. Trade-well, I heard my door clap. [*Seeing Whisper.*] Ha! a man lurking about my house: Who do you want there, Sir?

Whisp. Want—want, a pox, Sir Jealous! What must I say now?

Sir Jea. Ay, want; have you a letter or message for any body there? — O' my conscience this is some he bawd—

Whisp. Letter or message, Sir!

Sir Jea. Ay, letter or message, Sir.

Whisp. No, not I, Sir.

Sir Jea. Sirrah, sirrah, I'll have you set in the stocks, if you don't tell me your business immediately.

Whisp. Nay, Sir, my business—is no great matter of business, neither; and yet 'tis business of consequence, too.

Sir Jea. Sirrah, don't trifle with me.

Whisp. Trifle, Sir! have you found him, Sir?

Sir Jea. Found what, you rascal?

Whisp. Why Trifle is the very lap-dog my lady lost, Sir; I fancy'd I saw him run into this house. I'm glad you have him—Sir, my lady will be overjoy'd that I have found him.

Sir Jea. Who is your lady, friend?

Whisp. My lady Love-Puppy, Sir.

Sir Jea. My lady Love-Puppy, Sir! then pr'ythee carry thyself to her, for I know no other whelp that belongs

belongs to her; and let me catch you no more puppy-hunting about my doors, lest I have you prest into the service, firrah.

Whisp. By no means, Sir—Your humble servant; I must watch whether he goes, or no, before I can tell my master. [Exit.

Sir Jea. This fellow has the officious leer of a pimp, and I half suspect a design; but I'll be upon them before they think on me, I warrant 'em.

SCENE Charles's Lodgings.

Enter Charles and Marplot.

Cha. Honest Marplot, I thank thee for this supply. I expect my lawyer with a thousand pounds I have ordered him to take up, and then you shall be repaid.

Marpl. Pho, pho, no more of that;—here comes Sir George Airy.

Enter Sir George.

Curfedly out of humour at his disappointment; see how he looks! ha, ha, ha!

Sir Geo. Ah Charles, I am so humbled in my pretensions to plots upon women, that I believe I shall never have courage enough to attempt a chamber-maid again. I'll tell thee.

Cha. Ha, ha! I'll spare you the relation, by telling you—Impatient to know your business with my father, when I saw you enter, I slipped back into the next room, where I over-heard every syllable.

Sir Geo. That I said?—But I'll be hang'd if you heard her answer—But pr'ythee tell me, Charles, is she a fool?

Cha. I ne'er suspected her for one; but Marplot can inform you better, if you'll allow him a judge.

Marpl. A fool! I'll justify she has more wit than all the rest of her sex put together; why, she'll rally me till I han't one word to say for myself.

Cha. A mighty proof of her wit, truly!

Marpl. There must be some trick in't, Sir George; egad I'll find it out, if it cost me the sum you paid for't.

Sir Geo. Do, and command me—

Marpl. Enough, let me alone to trace a secret—

Enter Whisper, and speaks aside to his Master.

The devil! Whisper here again; that fellow never speaks out. Is this the same, or a new secret? Sir George, won't you ask Charles what news Whisper brings?

Sir Geo. Not I, Sir; I suppose it does not relate to me.

Marpl. Lord, lord, how little curiosity some people have! Now my chief pleasure lies in knowing every body's business.

Sir Geo. I fancy, Charles, thou hast some engagement upon thy hands: I have a little business, too. Marplot, if it fall in your way to bring me any intelligence from Miranda, you'll find me at the Thatch'd House at six—

Marpl. You do me much honour.

Cba. You guess right, Sir George; with me success.

Sir Geo. Better than attended me. Adieu. *[Exit.]*

Cba. Marplot, you must excuse me—

Marpl. Nay, nay, what need of any excuse amongst friends? I'll go with you.

Cba. Indeed you must not.

Marpl. No! then I suppose 'tis a duel, and I will go to secure you.

Cba. Well, but it is no duel, consequently no danger. Therefore pr'ythee be answer'd.

Marpl. What is't a mistress, then?—mum—you know I can be silent upon occasion.

Cba. I wish you could be civil too: I tell you, you neither must nor shall go with me. Farewell. *[Exit.]*

Marpl. Why then—I must and will follow you. *[Exit.]*

The End of the Second Act.

ACT III. SCENE a Street.

Enter Charles.

Cba. **W**ELL, here's the house which holds the lovely prize quiet and serene: here no noisy footmen throng to tell the world, that beauty dwells within; no ceremonious visit makes the lover wait; no rival to give my heart a pang: who would not scale the
the

the window at midnight without fear of the jealous father's pistol, rather than fill up the train of a coquet, where every minute he is jostled out of place? [*Knocks softly.*] Mrs. Patch, Mrs. Patch!

Enter Patch.

Patch. Oh, are you come, Sir? All's safe.

Cha. So in, in then.

Enter Marplot.

Marpl. There he goes: who the devil lives here? except I can find out that, I am as far from knowing his business as ever; gad I'll watch, it may be a bawdy-house, and he may have his throat cut; if there should be any mischief, I can make oath he went in. Well, Charles, in spite of your endeavours to keep me out of the secret, I may save your life for aught I know: At that corner I'll plant myself, there I shall see whoever goes in, or comes out. Gad, I love discoveries. [*Exit.*]

SCENE *draws*, Charles, Isabinda, and Patch.

Isab. Patch, look out sharp; have a care of dad.

Patch. I warrant you.

Isab. Well, Sir, if I may judge your love by your courage, I ought to believe you sincere; for you venture into the lion's den when you come to see me.

Cha. If you'd consent, whilst the furious beast is abroad, I'd free you from the reach of his paws.

Isab. That would be but to avoid one danger by running into another: 'like poor wretches who fly the burning ship, and meet their fate in the water.' Come, come, Charles, I fear, if I consult my reason, confinement and plenty is better than liberty and starving. I know you'd make the frolick pleasing for a little time, by saying and doing a world of tender things; but when our small substance is exhausted, and a thousand requisites for life are wanting; love, who rarely dwells with poverty, would also fail us.

Cha. Faith, I fancy not; methinks my heart has laid up a stock will last for life: to back which, I have taken a thousand pound upon my uncle's estate; that surely will support us till one of our fathers relent.

Isab. There's no trusting to that, my friend; I doubt
B 4 your

your father will carry his humour to the grave, and mine till he sees me settled in Spain.

Cha. And can you then cruelly resolve to stay till that curs'd Don arrives, and suffer that youth, beauty, fire, and wit, to be sacrificed to the arms of a dull Spaniard, to be immur'd, and forbid the sight of any thing that's human?

Isab. No, when it comes to that extremity, and no stratagem can relieve us, thou shalt lift for a soldier, and I'll carry thy knapsack after thee.

Cha. Bravely resolv'd! the world cannot be more savage than our parents, and fortune generally assists the bold; therefore consent now: Why should we put it to a future hazard? Who knows when we shall have another opportunity?

Isab. Oh, you have your ladder of ropes, I suppose, and the closet-window stands just where it did; and if you han't forgot to write in characters, Patch will find a way for our assignations. Thus much of the Spanish contrivance my father's severity has taught me: I thank him: though I hate the nation, I admire their management in these affairs.

Enter Patch.

Patch. Oh, Madam, I see my master coming up the street.

Cha. Oh, the devil, would I had my ladder now! I thought you had not expected him till night: why, why, why, why, what shall I do, Madam?

Isab. Oh! for Heaven's sake! don't go that way, you'll meet him full in the teeth: Oh, unlucky moment!

Cha. Adsheart, can you shut me into no cupboard, nor ram me into a chest, ha?

Patch. Impossible, Sir, he searches every hole in the house.

Isab. Undone for ever! if he sees you, I shall never see you more.

Patch. I have thought on it: run you to your chamber, Madam; and, Sir, come you along with me: I'm certain you may easily get down from the balcony.

Cha. My life, adieu——Lead on, guide. *[Exit.]*

Isab. Heaven preserve him! *[Exit.]*

S C E N E

THE BUSY BODY.

33

SCENE *changes to the street.*

Enter Sir Jealous, with Marplot behind him.

Sir Jea. I don't know what's the matter, but I have a strong suspicion all is not right within; that fellow sauntering about my door, and his tale of a puppy had the face of a lie, methought. By St. Iago, if I should find a man in the house, I'd make mince-meat of him—

Marpl. Ah, poor Charles—ha? Egad he is old—I fancy I might bully him, and make Charles have an opinion of my courage.

Sir Jea. My own key shall let me in; I'll give them no warning. *[Feeling for his key.]*

Marpl. What's that you say, Sir?

[Going up to Sir Jealous.]

Sir Jea. What's that to you? *[Turns quick upon him.]*

Marpl. Yes, 'tis to me, Sir: for the gentleman you threaten is a very honest gentleman. Look to't; for if he comes not as safe out of your house as he went in, I have half a dozen Myrmidons hard by shall beat it about your ears.

Sir Jea. Went in! What, is he in, then? Ah! a combination to undo me—I'll Myrmidon you, ye dog, you—Thieves! thieves!

[Beats Marplot all the while he cries thieves.]

Marpl. Murder, murder; I was not in your house, Sir.

Enter servant.

Serv. What's the matter, Sir?

Sir Jea. The matter, rascal! You have let a man in to my house; but I'll flea him alive; follow me, I'll not leave a mouse-hole unsearch'd; if I find him, by St. Iago, I'll equip him for the Opera.

Marpl. A deuce of his cane, there's no trusting to age—What shall I do to relieve Charles? Egad, I'll raise the neighbourhood—Murder! murder!—*[Charles drops down upon him from the balcony.]* Charles, faith I'm glad to see thee safe out, with all my heart.

Cha. A pox of your bawling: how the Devil came you here?

B 5

Marpl.

Marpl. Here! 'gad, I have done you a piece of service; I told the old thunderbolt, that the gentleman that was gone in, was——

Cha. Was it you that told him, Sir? [*Laying hold of him.*
'Sdeath, I could crush thee into atoms. [*Exit Charles.*

Marpl. What, will you choak me for my kindness?—Will my enquiring soul never leave searching into other people's affairs, till it gets squeez'd out of my body; I dare not follow him now for my blood, he's in such a passion—I'll to Miranda: if I can discover aught that may oblige Sir George, it may be a means to reconcile me again to Charles. [*Exit.*

Enter Sir Jealous and his servants.

Sir Jea. Are you sure you have search'd every where?

Serv. Yes, from the top of the house to the bottom.

Sir Jea. Under the beds, and over the beds?

Serv. Yes, and in them too; but found no-body, Sir.

Sir Jea. Why, what could this rogue mean?

Enter Isabinda and Patch.

Patch. Take courage, Madam, I saw him safe out.

[*Aside to Isab.*

Isab. Bless me! what's the matter, Sir?

Sir Jea. You know best—Pray where's the man that was here just now?

Isab. What man, Sir? I saw none!

Patch. Nor I, by the trust you repose in me: do you think I would let a man come within these doors, when you are absent?

Sir Jea. Ah, Patch, she may be too cunning for thy honesty; the very scout, that he had set to give warning, discover'd it to me—and threatened me with half a dozen Myrmidons—but I think I maul'd the villain. These afflictions you draw upon me, Mistress!

Isab. Pardon me, Sir, 'tis your own ridiculous humour draws you into these vexations, and gives every fool pretence to banter you.

Sir Jea. No, 'tis your idle conduct, your coquettish flirting into the balcony—Oh! with what joy shall I resign thee into the arms of Don Diego Babinetto?

Isab. And with what industry shall I avoid him? [*Aside.*

Sir Jea. Certainly that rogue had a message from somebody

somebody or other; but being baulk'd by my coming, pop'd that sham upon me. Come along, ye fots, let's see if we can find the dog again. Patch, lock her up; d'ye hear.

Patch. Yes, Sir,—ay, walk till your heels ake, you'll find no-body, I promise you.

Isab. Who cou'd that scout be which he talks of?

Patch. Nay, I can't imagine, without it was Whisper.

Isab. Well, dear Patch, let's employ all our thoughts how to escape this horrid Don Diego; my very heart sinks at his terrible name.

Patch. Fear not, Madam, Don Carlo shall be the man, or I'll lose the reputation of contriving; and then what's a chamber-maid good for?

Isab. Say'st thou so, my girl? Then—

' Let dad be jealous, multiply his cares,

' Whilst love instructs me to avoid the snares;

' I'll, spite of all his Spanish caution, show,

' How much for love a British maid can do.'

SCENE Sir Francis Gripe's House.

Sir Francis and Miranda meeting.

Miran. Well, Gardee, how did I perform the dumb scene?

Sir Fran. To admiration—Thou dear little rogue—let me buss thee for it: nay, adod, I will, Chargee, so muzzle, and tuzzle, and hug thee; I will, i'faith, I will.

[Hugging and kissing her.]

Miran. Nay, Gardee, don't be so lavish; who would ride post, when the journey lasts for life?

Sir Fran. Ah wag, ah wag, I'll buss thee again, for that.

' Miran. Faugh! how he stinks of tobacco! what a delicate bedfellow I should have!

[Aside.]

Sir Fran. Oh, I am transported! When, when, my dear, wilt thou convince the world of the happy day? When shall we marry, ha?

Miran. There's nothing wanting but your consent, Sir Francis.

Sir Fran. My consent! What does my charmer mean?

Miran. Nay, 'tis only a whim: but I'll have every thing

according to form—Therefore, when you sign an authentic paper, drawn up by an able lawyer, that I have your leave to marry, the next day makes me yours, Gardee.

Sir Fran. Ha, ha, ha! a whim indeed! why is it not demonstration I give my leave when I marry thee?

Miran. Not for your reputation, Gardee; the malicious world will be apt to say you trick'd me into marriage, and so take the merit from my choice. Now I will have the act my own, to let the idle fops see how much I prefer a man loaded with years and wisdom.

Sir Fran. Humph! Pr'ythee leave out years, Chargee. I'm not so old, as thou shalt find: adod, I'm young; there's a caper for ye. [Jumps.]

Miran. Oh, never excuse it; why, I like you the better for being old—But I shall suspect you don't love me, if you refuse me this formality.

Sir Fran. Not love thee, Chargee! Adod, I do love thee better than, than, than, better than—what shall I say? Egad, better than money; i'faith I do—

Miran. That's false, I'm sure [*Aside.*] To prove it, do this, then.

Sir Fran. Well, I will do it, Chargee, provided I bring a licence at the same time.

Miran. Ay, and a parson too, if you please: Ha, ha, ha! I cannot help laughing to think how all the young coxcombs about town will be mortified when they hear of our marriage.

Sir Fran. So they will, so they will; ha, ha, ha!

Miran. Well, I fancy I shall be so happy with my Gardee—

Sir Fran. If wearing pearls and jewels, or eating gold, as the old saying is, can make thee happy, thou shalt be so, my sweetest, my lovely, my charming, my—verily I know not what to call thee.

Miran. You must know, Gardee, that I am so eager to have this business concluded, that I have employed my woman's brother, who is a lawyer in the Temple, to settle matters just to your liking; you are to give your consent to my marriage, which is to yourself, you know: but mum, you must take no notice of that. So then I will,
that

that is, with your leave, put my writings into his hands; then to-morrow, we come flap upon them with a wedding that nobody thought on; by which you seize me and my estate, and, I suppose, make a bonfire of your own act and deed.

Sir Fran. Nay, but, Chargee, if—

Miran. Nay, Gardee, no ifs—Have I refus'd three northern lords, two British peers, and half a score knights, to have put in your ifs?—

Sir Fran. So thou hast, indeed, and I will trust to thy management. Od, I'm all of a fire.

Miran. 'Tis a wonder the dry stubble does not blaze.

[*Aside.* Enter Marplot.

Sir Fran. How now, who sent for you, Sir? What's the hundred pound gone already?

Marpl. No, Sir, I don't want money now.

Sir Fran. No, that's a miracle! but there's one thing you want, I'm sure.

Marpl. Ay, what's that, Guardian?

Sir Fran. Manners: what, had I no servants without?

Marpl. None that could do my business, guardian, which is at present with this lady.

Miran. With me, Mr. Marplot! what is it, I beseech you?

Sir Fran. Ay, Sir, what is it? Any thing that relates to her may be deliver'd to me.

Marpl. I deny that.

Miran. That's more than I do, Sir.

Marpl. Indeed, Madam! Why then to proceed: fame says, that you and my most conscionable Guardian here design'd, contriv'd, plotted, and agreed, to chouse a very civil, honest, honourable gentleman out of a hundred pounds.

Miran. That I contriv'd it!

Marpl. Ay, you—You said never a word against it, so far you are guilty.

Sir Fran. Pray tell that civil, honest, honourable gentleman, that if he has any more such sums to fool away, they shall be received like the last; ha, ha, ha! chous'd, quotha! But hark ye, let him know, at the same time, that

that if he dare to report I trick'd him of it, I shall recommend a lawyer to him shall shew him a trick for twice as much : d'ye hear ? tell him that.

Marpl. So, and this is the way you use a gentleman, and my friend ?

Miran. Is the wretch thy friend ?

Marpl. The wretch ! Look ye, Madam, don't call names ; egad, I won't take it.

Miran. Why, you won't beat me, will you ? ha, ha !

Marpl. I don't know whether I will or no.

Sir Fran. Sir, I shall make a servant shew you out at the window, if you are faucy.

Marpl. I am your most humble servant, Guardian ; I design to go out the same way I came in. I would only ask this lady, if she does not think in her soul Sir George Airy is not a fine gentleman ?

Miran. He dresses well.

Sir Fran. Which is chiefly owing to his taylor and valet de chambre.

Miran. And if you allow that a proof of his being a fine gentleman, he is so.

Marpl. The judicious part of the world allow him wit, courage, gallantry, and management ; tho' I think he forfeited that character, when he flung away a hundred pounds upon your dumb ladyship.

Sir Fran. Does that gaul him ? ha, ha, ha !

Miran. So Sir George, remaining in deep discontent, has sent you, his trusty 'squire, to utter his complaint : Ha, ha, ha !

Marpl. Yes, Madam ; and you, like a cruel, hard-hearted Jew, value it no more—than I wou'd your ladyship, were I Sir George, you, you, you !—

Miran. Oh, don't call names : I know you love to be employ'd, and I'll oblige you, and you shall carry him a message from me.

Marpl. According as I like it : what is it ?

Miran. Nay, a kind one, you may be sure—First tell him, I have chose this gentleman to have and to hold, and so forth.

Sir Fran. Oh, the dear rogue, how I doat on her !

[*Aside*
Miran.

Miran. And advise his impertinence to trouble me no more ; for I prefer Sir Francis for a husband before all the fops in the universe.

Marpl. Oh Lord, oh Lord ! she's bewitch'd, that's certain : here's a husband for eighteen—Here's a shape—Here's bones rattling in a leathern bag. [*Turning Sir Francis about.*] Here's buckram and canvas to scrub you to repentance.

Sir Fran. Sirrah, my cane shall teach you repentance presently.

Marpl. No, faith, I have felt its twin brother from just such a wither'd hand too lately.

Miran. One thing more : advise him to keep from the garden-gate on the left hand ; for if he dare to saunter there about the hour of eight, as he used to do, he shall be saluted with a pistol or a blunderbuss.

Sir Fran. Oh, monstrous ! why, Chargee, did he use to come to the garden gate ?

Miran. The gard'ner describ'd just such another man that always watch'd his coming out, and fain wou'd have brib'd him for his entrance—Tell him he shall find a warm reception if he comes this night.

Marpl. Pistols and blunderbusses ! Egad, a warm reception indeed : I shall take care to inform him of your kindness, and advise him to keep farther off.

Miran. I hope he will understand my meaning better, than to follow your advice. [*Aside.*]

Sir Fran. Thou hast sign'd, seal'd, and ta'en possession of my heart for ever, Chargee, ha, ha, ha ! and for you, Mr. Sauce-box, let me have no more of your messages, if ever you design to inherit your estate, gentleman.

Marpl. Why there 'tis now. Sure I shall be out of your clutches one day—Well, Guardian, I say no more ; but if you be not as arrant a cuckold as e'er drove bargain upon the Exchange, or paid attendance to a court, I am the son of a whetstone ; and so your humble servant. [*Exit.*]

Miran. Don't forget the message ; ha, ha, ha !

Sir Fran. I am so provok'd—'tis well he's gone.

Miran. Oh mind him not, Gardee ; but let's sign articles, and then—

Sir

Sir Fran. And then—Add, I believe I am metamorphos'd; my pulse beats high and my blood boils, methinks—
[*Kissing and hugging her.*]

Mirant. Oh fie, Gardet, be not so violent; consider the market lasts all the year—Well; I'll in and see if the lawyer be come; you'll follow? [Exit.]

Sir Fran. Ay, to the world's end, my dear. Well, Frank, thou art a lucky fellow in thy old age, to have such a delicate morsel, and thirty thousand pounds in love with thee; I shall be the envy of batchelors, the glory of marry'd men, and the wonder of the town. Some guardians would be glad to compound for part of the estate, at dispatching an heiress; but I engross the whole: O! *mibi præteritos referet si Jupiter annos.* [Exit.]

SCENE changes to a tavern; discovers Sir George and Charles with wine before them, and Whisperm waiting.

Sir Geo. Nay, pr'ythee don't be grave, Charles: misfortunes will happen, ha, ha, ha! 'tis some comfort to have a companion in our sufferings.

Cha. I am only apprehensive for Isabinda: her father's humour is implacable; and how far his jealousy may transport him to her undoing, shocks my soul to think.

Sir Geo. But since you escap'd undiscover'd by him, his rage will quickly lash into a calm, never fear it.

Cha. But who knows what that unlucky dog Marplot told him? nor can I imagine what brought him hither: that fellow is ever doing mischief; and yet, to give him his due, he never designs it. This is some blundering adventure, wherein he thought to shew his friendship, as he calls it; a curse on him!

Sir Geo. Then you must forgive him: what said he?

Cha. Said? nay, I had more mind to cut his throat, than to hear his excuses.

Sir Geo. Where is he?

Whisp. Sir, I saw him go into Sir Francis Gripe's just now.

Cha. Oh! then he's upon your business, Sir George; a thousand to one but he makes some mistake there too.

Sir

THE BUSY BODY. 41

Sir Geo. Impossible, without he huffs the Lady, and makes love to Sir Francis.

Enter Drawer.

Draw. Mr. Marplot is below, gentlemen, and desires to know if he may have leave to wait upon ye.

Cha. How civil the rogue is when he has done a fault!

Sir Geo. Ho! desire him to walk up; Pr'ythee, Charles, throw off this chagrin, and be good company.

Cha. Nay, hang him, I'm not angry with him: Whisper, fetch me pen, ink, and paper.

Whisp. Yes, Sir. *[Exit Whisp.]*

Enter Marplot.

Cha. Do but mark his sheepish look, Sir George.

Marpl. Dear Charles, don't o'erwhelm a man—already under unsupportable affliction. I'm sure I always intend to serve my friends; but if my malicious stars deny the happiness, is the fault mine?

Sir Geo. Never mind him, Mr. Marplot; he is eat up with spleen. But tell me, what says Miranda?

Miran. Says,—nay, we are all undone there, too.

Cha. I told you so; nothing prospers that he undertakes.

Marpl. Why, can I help her having chose your father for better for worse?

Cha. So: There's another of fortune's strokes. I suppose I shall be edg'd out of my estate with twins every year, let who will get 'em.

Sir Geo. What, is the woman really possess'd?

Marpl. Yes, with the spirit of contradiction: she rail'd at you most prodigiously.

Sir Geo. That's no ill sign.

Enter Whisper, with pen, ink, and paper.

Marpl. You'd say it was no good sign, if you knew all.

Sir Geo. Why, pr'ythee?

Marpl. Hark'e, Sir George, let me warn you, pursue your old haunt no more, it may be dangerous.

[Charles sits down to write.]

Sir Geo. My old haunt! what do you mean?

Marpl. Why in short, then, since you will have it,
Miranda

Miranda vows if you dare approach the garden gate at eight o'clock, as you us'd, you shall be saluted with a blunderbuss, Sir. These were her very words ; nay she bid me tell you so too.

Sir Geo. Ha ! the garden-gate at eight, as I us'd to do ! there must be a meaning in this. Is there such a gate, Charles ?

Cha. Yes, yes ; it opens into the Park ; I suppose her ladyship has made many a scamper thro' it.

Sir Geo. It must be an assignation, then. Ha, my heart springs for joy ; 'tis a propitious omen. My dear Marplot, let me embrace thee, thou art my friend, my better angel—

Marpl. What do you mean, Sir George ?

Sir Geo. No matter what I mean. Here, take a bumper to the garden-gate, you dear rogue, you.

Marpl. You have reason to be transported, Sir George ; I have sav'd your life.

Sir Geo. My life ! thou hast sav'd my soul, man. Charles, if thou dost not pledge this health, may'st thou never taste the joys of love.

Cha. Whisper, be sure you take care how you deliver this ; [*Gives him the letter*] bring me the answer to my lodgings.

Whisp. I warrant you, Sir.

Marpl. Whither does that letter go ?—Now I dare not ask for my blood.

Cha. Now I'm for you.

Sir Geo. To the garden-gate at the hour of eight, Charles ; along, Huzza !

Cha. I begin to conceive you.

Marpl. That's more than I do, egad—to the garden-gate, huzza. [*Drinks.*] But I hope you design to keep far enough off on't, Sir George.

Sir Geo. Ay, ay ; never fear that ; she shall see I despise her frowns ; let her use her blunderbuss against the next fool, she shan't reach me with the smoak, I warrant her ; ha, ha, ha !

Marpl. Ah, Charles, if you could receive a disappointment thus *en cavalier*, one should have some comfort in being beat for you.

Cha.

Cha. The fool comprehends nothing.

Sir Geo. Nor would I have him: pr'ythee take him along with thee.

Cha. Enough—Marplot, you shall go home with me.

Marpl. I'm glad I'm well with him, however. — Sir George, yours.—Egad, Charles asking me to go home with him, gives me a shrewd suspicion there's more in the garden-gate than I comprehend. Faith I'll give him the drop, and away to Guardian's, and find it out.

Sir Geo. I kiss both your hands. — And now for the garden-gate.

It's beauty gives the assignation there,

And love too powerful grows t' admit of fear. [Exit.

The End of the THIRD ACT.

ACT IV. SCENE *the outside of Sir Jealous Traffick's House, Patch peeping out of the door.*

Enter Whisper.

Whisp. **H**A, Mrs. Patch, this is a lucky minute, to find you so readily; my master dies with impatience.

Patch. My lady imagin'd so; and, by her orders, I have been scouting this hour in searching you, to inform you that Sir Jealous has invited some friends to supper with him to-night, which gives an opportunity to your master to make use of his ladder of ropes: the closet-window shall be open, and Isabinda ready to receive him: bid him come immediately.

Whisp. Excellent! he'll not disappoint, I warrant him. — But hold, I have a letter here, which I'm to carry an answer to. I can't think what language the direction is.

Patch. Pho, 'tis no language, but a character which the lovers invented to avert discovery — Ha, I hear my old master coming down stairs; it is impossible you should have an answer; away, and bid him come himself

self for that : be gone, we are ruin'd if you're seen, for he has doubled his care since the last accident.

Whisp. I go, I go.

[*Exit.*

Patch. There, go thou into my pocket. [*Puts it beside, and it falls down.*] Now, I'll up the back-stairs, lest I meet him.—Well, a dextrous chamber-maid is the ladies best utensil, I say.

[*Exit.*

Enter Sir Jealous, with a letter in his hand.

Sir Jea. So, this is some comfort : this tells me that Signior Don Diego Babinetto is safely arriv'd ; he shall marry my daughter the minute he comes.—Ha, ha ! what's here ? [*Takes up the letter Patch drop'd.*] A letter ! I don't know what to make of the superscription. I'll see what's within side ;—[*opens it*]—humph—'tis Hebrew, I think. What can this mean !—There must be some trick in it ;—this was certainly design'd for my daughter ; but I don't know that she can speak any language but her mother-tongue.—No matter for that ; this may be one of love's hieroglyphicks ; and I fancy I saw Patch's tail sweep by : that wench may be a slut ; and, instead of guarding my honour, betray it : I'll find it out, I'm resolv'd.——Who's there ?

Enter Servant.

• What answer did you bring from the gentlemen I sent you to invite ?

• *Serv.* That they'd all wait of you, Sir, as I told you before ; but I suppose you forgot, Sir.

• *Sir Jea.* Did I so, Sir ? But I shan't forget to break your head, if any of them come, Sir.

• *Serv.* Come, Sir ! why did not you send me to desire their company, Sir ?

• *Sir Jea.* But I send you now to desire their absence : say I have something extraordinary fallen out, which calls me abroad contrary to expectation, and ask their pardon ; and, d'ye hear, send the butler to me.

• *Serv.* Yes, Sir. [*Exit.*

Enter Butler.

• *Sir Jea.* If this paper has a meaning, I'll find it.—

• Lay the cloth in my daughter's chamber, and bid the cook send supper thither presently.

• *Butl.* Yes,

Butl. Yes, Sir. — Hey-day, what's the matter now?

[Exit.]

Sir Jea. He wants the eyes of Argus, that has a young handsome daughter in this town; but my comfort is, I shall not be troubled long with her. He that pretends to rule a girl once in her teens, had better be at sea in a storm, and would be in less danger;

For let him do or counsel all he can,

She thinks and dreams of nothing else but man. [Exit.]

SCENE Isabinda's Chamber.

Isabinda and Patch.

Isab. Are you sure nobody saw you speak to Whisper?

Patch. Yes, very sure, madam: but I heard Sir Jealous coming down stairs, so clapt his letter into my pocket. [Feels for the letter.]

Isab. A letter! Give it me quickly.

Patch. Bless me! what's become on't—I'm sure I put it — [Searching still.]

Isab. Is it possible, thou could'st be so careless!—Oh! I'm undone for ever, if it be lost.

Patch. I must have dropt it upon the stairs. But why are you so much alarm'd? If the worst happens, nobody can read it, madam, nor find out whom it was design'd for.

Isab. If it falls into my father's hands, the very figure of a letter will produce ill consequences. Run and look for it upon the stairs this moment.

Patch. Nay, I'm sure it can be no where else — [As she is going out of the door, meets the butler.] How now, what do you want?

Butl. My master ordered me to lay the cloth here for his supper.

Isab. Ruin'd, past redemption — [Aside.]

Patch. You mistake, sure; what shall we do?

Isab. I thought he expected company to-night—Oh! poor Charles! Oh! unfortunate Isabinda!

Butl. I thought so too, Madam, but I suppose he has alter'd his mind. [Lays the cloth, and exit. Is.]

Ifab. The letter is the cause; this heedless action has undone me: fly and fasten the closet-window, which will give Charles notice to retire. Ha, my father! Oh confusion!

Enter Sir Jealous.

Sir Jea. Hold, hold, *Patch*, whither are you going? I'll have nobody stir out of the room till after supper.

Patch. Sir, I was going to reach your easy chair—Oh, wretched accident!

Sir Jea. I'll have nobody stir out of the room. I don't want my easy chair.

Ifab. What will be the event of this! [*Aside.*

Sir Jea. Hark ye, daughter; do you know this hand?

Ifab. As I suspected—hand do you call it, Sir? 'Tis some school-boy's scraul.

Patch. Oh invention! thou chamber-maid's best friend, assist me.

Sir Jea. Are you sure you don't understand it?

[*Patch feels in her bosom, and shakes her coats.*

Ifab. Do you understand it, Sir?

Sir Jea. I wish I did.

Ifab. Thank Heaven you do not. [*Aside.*] Then I know no more of it than you do, indeed, Sir.

Patch. O Lord! O Lord! what have you done, Sir? Why the paper is mine, I dropt it out of my bosom.

[*Snatching it from him.*

Sir Jea. Ha! your's, mistress?

Ifab. What does she mean by owning it? [*Aside.*

Patch. Yes, Sir, it is.

Sir Jea. What is it? speak!

Patch. Yes, Sir, it is a charm for the tooth-ach—I have worn it these seven years; 'twas given me by an angel for aught I know, when I was raving with the pain; for nobody knew from whence he came, nor whither he went: He charg'd me never to open it, lest some dire vengeance befall me, and Heaven knows what will be the event. Oh! cruel misfortune, that I should drop it, and you should open it—If you had not open'd it —

Ifab. Excellent wench!

[*Aside.*
Sir

Sir Jea. Pox of your charms and whims for me ; if that be all, 'tis well enough ; there, there, burn it, and I warrant you no vengeance will follow.

Patch. So, all's right again thus far. [*Aside.*]

Isab. I would not lose Patch for the world—I'll take courage a little. [*Aside.*] Is this usage for your daughter, Sir ? Must my virtue and conduct be suspected for every trifle ? You immure me like some dire offender here, and deny me all the recreations which my sex enjoy, and the custom of the country ' and modesty ' allow ; yet not content with that, you make my confinement more intolerable by your mistrusts and jealousies ; wou'd I were dead, so I were free from this.

Sir Jea. To-morrow rids you of this tiresome load ; Don Diego Babinetto will be here, and then my care ends, and his begins.

Isab. Is he come, then ?—Oh how shall I avoid this hated marriage ? [*Aside.*]

Enter Servants with supper.

Sir Jea. Come, will you sit down ?

Isab. I can't eat, Sir.

Patch. No, I dare swear he has given her supper enough. I wish I could get into the closet. [*Aside.*]

Sir Jea. Well, if you can't eat, then give me a song whilst I do.

Isab. I have such a cold I can scarce speak, Sir, much less sing. How shall I prevent Charles coming in ? [*Aside.*]

Sir Jea. I hope you have the use of your fingers, Madam. Play a tune upon your spinnet, whilst your woman sings me a song.

Patch. I'm as much out of tune as my lady, if he knew all. [*Aside.*]

Isab. I shall make excellent music. [*Sits down to play.*]

Patch. Really, Sir, I am so frightened about your opening this charm, that I can't remember one song.

Sir Jea. Pish, hang your charm ; come, come, sing any thing.

Patch. Yes, I'm likely to sing, truly. [*Aside.*] Humph, humph ; bless me, I cannot raise my voice, my heart pants so.

Sir Jea. Why, what does your heart pant so that you can't play neither? Pray what key are you in, ha?

Patch. Ah, wou'd the key was turn'd on you once. *[Aside.*

Sir Jea. Why don't you sing, I say?

Patch. When Madam has put her spinnet in tune, Sir; humph; humph —

Isab. I cannot play, Sir, whatever ails me. *[Rising.*

Sir Jea. Zounds, sit down, and play me a tune, or I'll break the spinnet about your ears.

Isab. What will become of me? *[Sits down and plays.*

Sir Jea. Come, mistress. *[To Patch.*

Patch. Yes, Sir. *[Sings, but horridly out of tune.*

Sir Jea. Hey, hey, why you are a-top of the house, and you are down in the cellar. What is the meaning of this? Is it on purpose to cross me, ha?

Patch. Pray, Madam, take it a little lower, I cannot reach that note — Nor any note, I fear.

Isab. Well begin—Oh! Patch, we shall be discover'd.

Patch. I sink with the apprehension, Madam—Humph, humph—*[Sings.]* *[Charles opens the closet door.*

Cha. Music and singing.

'Tis thus the bright celestial court above

Beguiles the hours with music and with love.'

Death! her father there *[The women shriek.]* then I must fly—*[Exit into the closet.]* *[Sir Jealous rises up hastily, seeing Charles slip back into the closet.*

Sir Jea. Hell and furies, a man in the closet! —

Patch. Ah! a ghost, a ghost! — he must not enter the closet — *[Isabinda throws herself down before the closet door, as in a swoon.*

Sir Jea. The devil! I'll make a ghost of him, I warrant you. *[Strives to get by.*

Patch. Oh, hold, Sir, have a care, you'll tread upon my lady—Who waits there? Bring some water. Oh! this comes of your opening the charm: Oh, oh, oh, oh!

[Weeps aloud.

Sir Jea. I'll charm you, housewife, here lies the charm that conjur'd this fellow in, I'm sure on't; come out, you rascal, do so: Zounds take her from the door,

or

or I'll spurn her from it, and break your neck down stairs.

Isab. 'Oh, oh! where am I?'—He's gone, I heard him leap down. *[Aside to Patch.*

Patch. Nay, then let him enter—'here, here, Madam, smell to this; come give me your hand; come nearer to the window, the air will do you good.'

Sir Jea. I wou'd she were in her grave. Where are you, firrah? Villain, robber of my honour! I'll pull you out of your nest. *[Goes into the closet.*

Patch. You'll be mistaken, old gentleman, the bird is flown.

Isab. I'm glad I have 'scap'd so well. I was almost dead in earnest with the fright.

Re-enter Sir Jealous out of the closet.

Sir Jea. Whoever the dog were, he has escap'd out of the window, for the sash is up. But tho' he is got out of my reach, you are not: And first, Mrs. Pander, with your charms for the tooth-ach, get out of my house, go, troop; yet hold, stay, I'll see you out of my doors myself, but I'll secure your charge ere I go.

Isab. What do you mean, Sir? Was she not a creature of your own providing?

Sir Jea. She was of the devil's providing, for aught I know.

Patch. What have I done, Sir, to merit your displeasure?

Sir Jea. I don't know which of you have done it; but you shall both suffer for it, till I can discover whose guilt it is: Go, get in there: I'll move you from this side of the house. *[Pushes Isabinda in at the door, and locks it; puts the key in his pocket.]* I'll keep the key myself; I'll try what ghost will get into that room. And now, forsooth, I'll wait on you down stairs.

Patch. Ah, my poor lady—down stairs, Sir! But I won't go out, Sir, till I have look'd up my clothes.

Sir Jea. If thou wert as naked as thou wert born, thou shou'dst not stay to put on a smock. Come along, I say; when your mistress is marry'd, you shall have your rags, and every thing that belongs to you; but till then—

[Exit, pulling her out.

Patch. Oh! barbarous usage, for nothing!

Re-enter at the lower end.

Sir Jea. There, go, and come no more within sight of my habitation, these three days, I charge you.

[Slaps the door after her.]

Patch. Did ever any body see such an old monster?

Enter Charles.

Patch. Oh! Mr. Charles, your affairs and mine are in an ill posture.

Cha. I am inur'd to the frowns of Fortune: But what has befallen thee?

Patch. Sir Jealous, whose suspicious nature's always on the watch; nay, even while one eye sleeps, the other keeps centinel; upon sight of you, flew into such a violent passion, that I cou'd find no stratagem to appease him; but, in spite of all arguments, lock'd his daughter into his own apartment, and turn'd me out of doors.

Cha. Ha! O Isabinda!

Patch. And swears she shall neither see sun nor moon, till she is Don Diego Babinetto's wife, who arrived last night, and is expected with impatience.

Cha. He dies; yes, by all the wrongs of love he shall: here will I plant myself, and through my breast he shall make his passage, if he enters.

Patch. A most heroic resolution! There might be ways found out more to your advantage. Policy is often preferred to open force.

Cha. I apprehend you not.

Patch. What think you of personating this Spaniard, imposing upon the father, and marrying your mistress by his own consent?

Cha. Say'st thou so, my angel! Oh, cou'd that be done, my life to come wou'd be too short to recompense thee! But how can I do that, when I neither know what ship he came in, nor from what part of Spain; who recommends him, or how attended?

Patch. I can solve all this. He is from Madrid, his father's name Don Pedro Questo Portento Babinetto. Here's a letter of his to Sir Jealous, which he dropt one day!

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day! You understand Spanish, and the hand may be counterfeited. You conceive me, Sir?

Cha. My better Genius, thou hast reviv'd my drooping soul: I'll about it instantly. Come to my lodgings, and we'll concert matters. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE *a Garden Gate open, Scentwell waiting within.*

Enter Sir George Airy.

Sir Geo. So this is the gate, and most invitingly open: If there should be a blunderbus here now, what a dreadful ditty would my fall make for fools! and what a jest for the wits! how my name would be roar'd about the streets! Well, I'll venture all.

Scentw. Hift, hift! Sir George Airy—— *[Enters.]*

Sir Geo. A female voice! Thus far I'm safe. — My dear.

Scentw. No, I'm not your dear; but I'll conduct you to her; give me your hand: you must go thro' many a dark passage and dirty step before you arrive——

Sir Geo. I know I must before I arrive at paradise; therefore be quick, my charming guide.

Scentw. For aught you know; come, come, your hand, and away.

Sir Geo. Here, here, child, you can't be half so swift as my desires. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE *the House.*

Enter Miranda.

Miran. Well, let me reason a little with my mad self. Now don't I transgress all rules, to venture upon a man without the advice of the grave and wise? But then a rigid knavish Guardian, who would have marry'd me! To whom? Even to his nauseous self, or nobody. Sir George is what I have try'd in conversation, inquir'd into his character, and am satisfied in both. Then his love! Who would have given a hundred pounds only to have seen a woman he had not infinitely lov'd! So I

find my liking him has furnish'd me with arguments enough of his side; and now the only doubt remains, whether he will come or no.

Enter Scentwell.

Scentw. That's resolv'd, Madam; for here's the knight. *[Exit Scentw.]*

Sir Geo. And do I once more behold that lovely object, whose idea fills my mind, and forms my pleasing dreams!

Miran. What, beginning again in heroics! — Sir George, don't you remember how little fruit your last prodigal oration produc'd? not one bare single word in answer.

Sir Geo. Ha! the voice of my *Incognita*! — Why did you take ten thousand ways to captivate a heart your eyes alone had vanquish'd?

Miran. 'Pr'ythee,' no more of these flights; 'for our time's but short, and we must fall to business.' Do you think we can agree on that same terrible bugbear, Matrimony, without heartily repenting on both sides?

Sir Geo. It has been my wish since first my longing eyes beheld you.

Miran. And your happy ears drank in the pleasing news, I had thirty thousand pounds.

Sir Geo. Unkind! Did not I offer you in those purchas'd minutes to run the risk of your fortune, so you wou'd but secure that lovely person to my arms?

Miran. Well, if you have such love and tenderness, (since our wooing has been short) pray reserve it for our future days, to let the world see we are lovers after wedlock: 'twill be a novelty —

Sir Geo. Haste, then, and let us tie the knot, and prove the envy'd pair —

Miran. Hold! not so fast! I have provided better than to venture on dangerous experiments headlong — My Guardian, trusting to my dissembled love, has given up my fortune to my own disposal; but with this proviso, that he to-morrow morning weds me. He is now gone to Doctors Commons for a licence,

Sir Geo. Ha! a licence!

Miran.

Miran. But I have planted emissaries that will infallibly take him down to Epsom, under pretence that a brother usurer of his is to make him his executor: the thing on earth he covets.

Sir Geo. 'Tis his known character.

Miran. Now my instruments confirm him this man is dying, and he sends me word he goes this minute; it must be to-morrow ere he can be undeceiv'd. That time is ours.

Sir Geo. Let us improve it, then, and settle on our coming years, endless, endless happiness!

Miran. I dare not stir till I hear he's on the road—then I, and my writings, the most material point, are soon remov'd.

Sir Geo. I have one favour to ask, if it lies in your power: you wou'd be a friend to poor Charles, tho' the son of this tenacious man: he is as free from all his vices as nature and a good education can make him; and, what now I have vanity enough to hope will induce you, he is the man on earth I love.

Miran. I never was his enemy, and only put it on as it help'd my designs on his father. If his uncle's estate ought to be in his possession, which I shrewdly suspect, I may do him a singular piece of service.

Sir Geo. You are all goodness.

Enter Scentwell.

Scentw. Oh, Madam! my master and Mr. Marplot are just coming into the house.

Miran. Undone, undone! if he finds you here in this crisis, all my plots are unravell'd.

Sir Geo. What shall I do? can't I get back into the garden?

Scentw. Oh, no! he comes up those stairs.

Miran. Here, here, here! can you condescend to stand behind this chimney-board, Sir George?

Sir Geo. Any where, any where, dear Madam, without ceremony.

Scentw. Come, come, Sir; lie close——

[*They put him behind the chimney-board.*]

Enter Sir Francis and Marplot; Sir Francis peeling an Orange.

Sir Fran. I could not go, though 'tis upon life and death, without taking leave of dear Chargee. Besides, this fellow buzz'd into my ears, that thou might'st be so desperate as to shoot that wild rake which haunts the garden-gate; and that would bring us into trouble, dear—

Miran. So Marplot brought you back, then; I am oblig'd to him for that, I'm sure.

[Frowning at Marplot aside]

Marpl. By her looks she means she is not oblig'd to me. I have done some mischief now; but what, I can't imagine.

Sir Fran. Well, Chargee, I have had three messengers to come to Epsom to my neighbour Squeezum's, who, for all his vast riches, is departing. *[Sighs.]*

Marpl. Ay, see what all you usurers must come to.

Sir Fran. Peace, you young knave! Some forty years hence I may think on't—But, Chargee, I'll be with thee to-morrow, before those pretty eyes are open; I will, I will, Chargee, I'll rouse you, i'faith.—Here, Mrs. Scentwell, lift up your lady's chimney-board, that I may throw my peel in, and not litter her chamber.

Miran. O my stars! what will become of us now? *[Aside.]*

Scentw. Oh, pray, Sir, give it me: I love it above all things in nature; indeed I do.

Sir Fran. No, no, huffy; you have the green-pip already; I'll have no apothecary's bills.

[Goes towards the chimney.]

Miran. Hold, hold, hold, dear Gardee, I have a, a, a, a, a, a, monkey, shut up there; and if you open it before the man comes that is to tame it, 'tis so wild, 'twill break all my china, or get away, and that would break my heart; for I'm fond on't to distraction, next thee, dear Gardee.

[In a flattering tone.]

Sir Fran. Well, well, Chargee, I won't open it; she shall have her monkey, poor rogue; here, throw this peel out of the window. *[Exit Scentwell.]*

Marpl. A monkey, dear Madam, let me see it: I can

can tame a monkey as well as the best of them all.
Oh! how I love the little miniatures of man!

Miran. Be quiet, Mischief, and stand farther from the chimney — You shall not see my monkey — why sure —

[Striving with him.]

Marpl. For heav'n's sake, dear Madam, let me but peep, to see if it be as pretty as my lady Fiddle Faddle's. Has it got a chain?

Miran. Not yet; but I design it one shall last its life-time: nay, you shall not see it — Look, Gardee, how he teazes me!

Sir Fran. [Getting between him and the chimney.] Sirrah, Sirrah, let my Chargee's monkey alone, or Bamboo shall fly about your ears. What! is there no dealing with you?

Marpl. Pugh, pox of the monkey! here's a rout: I wish he may rival you.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir, they have put two more horses in the coach, as you order'd, and 'tis ready at the door.

Sir Fran. Well, I am going to be executor; better for thee, jewel. B'ye, Chargee, one buss! — I'm glad thou hast got a monkey to divert thee a little.

Miran. Thank'e, dear Gardee — Nay, I'll see you to the coach.

Sir Fran. That's kind, adod.

Miran. Come along, impertinence. [To Marplot.]

Marpl. [Stepping back.] Egad, I will see the monkey now. [Lifts up the board, and discovers Sir George.] O Lord! O Lord! thieves! thieves! murder!

Sir Geo. Dam'ye, you unlucky dog! 'tis I: which way shall I get out? shew me instantly, or I'll cut your throat.

Marpl. Undone, undone! at that door there. But hold, hold, break that china, and I'll bring you off.

[He runs off at the corner, and throws down some china.]

Re-enter Sir Francis, Miranda, and Scentwell.

Sir Fran. Mercy on me! what's the matter?

Miran. Oh you toad! what have you done?

Marpl. No great harm; I beg of you to forgive me.

Longing to see the monkey, I did but just raise up the board, and it flew over my shoulders, scratch'd all my face, broke yon china, and whisk'd out of the window.

Sir Fran. Was ever such an unlucky rogue! Sirrah, I forbid you my house. Call the servants to get the monkey again: I wou'd stay myself to look it, but that you know my earnest business.

Scentw. Oh my lady will be the best to lure it back; all them creatures love my lady extremely.

Miran. Go, go, dear Gardee, I hope I shall recover it.

Sir Fran. B'ye, b'ye, Dearee. Ah, Mischief, how you look now! b'ye, b'ye. [Exit.

Miran. Scentwell, see him in the coach, and bring me word.

Scentw. Yes, Madam.

Miran. So, Sir, you have done your friend a signal piece of service, I suppose.

Marpl. Why look you, Madam, if I have committed a fault, thank yourself; no man is more serviceable when I am let into a secret, and none more unlucky at finding it out. Who cou'd divine your meaning? when you talk'd of a blunderbuss, who thought of a rendezvous? and when you talk'd of a monkey, who the devil dreamt of Sir George?

Miran. A sign you converse but little with our sex, when you can't reconcile contradictions.

Enter Scentwell.

Scentw. He's gone, Madam, as fast as the coach and six can carry him—

Enter Sir George.

Sir Geo. Then I may appear.

Marpl. Dear Sir George, make my peace! On my soul, I did not think of you.

Sir Geo. I dare swear thou didst not. Madam, I beg you to forgive him.

Miran. Well, Sir George, if he can be secret.

Marpl. Ods heart, Madam, I'm as secret as a priest, when I'm trusted.

Sir Geo

Sir Geo. Why 'tis with a priest our business is at present.

Scentaw. Madam, here's Mrs. Ifabinda's woman to wait on you.

Miran. Bring her up.

Enter Patch.

How do ye, Mrs. Patch? What news from your lady?

Patch. That's for your private ear, Madam. Sir George, there's a friend of yours has an urgent occasion for your assistance.

Sir Geo. His name.

Patch. Charles.

Marpl. Ha! then there's something a foot that I know nothing of. I'll wait on you, Sir George.

Sir Geo. A third person may not be proper, perhaps; as soon as I have dispatched my own affairs, I am at his service: I'll send my servant to tell him I'll wait upon him in half an hour.

Miran. How came you employed in this message, Mrs. Patch?

Patch. Want of business, Madam: I am discharged by my master, but hope to serve my lady still.

Miran. How! discharged! you must tell me the whole story within.

Patch. With all my heart, Madam.

Marpl. Pish! Pox, I wish I were fairly out of the house. I find marriage is the end of this secret: And now I am half mad to know what Charles wants him for.

[Aside.]

Sir Geo. Madam, I'm doubly press'd by love and friendship: this exigence admits of no delay. Shall we make Marplot of the party?

Miran. If you'll run the hazard, Sir George; I believe he means well.

Marpl. Nay, nay, for my part, I desire to be let into nothing; I'll be gone, therefore pray don't mistrust me.

[Going.]

Sir Geo. So, now he has a mind to be gone to Charles: but not knowing what affairs he may have upon his hands at present, I'm resolv'd he shan't stir. No,

Mr.

Mr. Marplot, you must not leave us, we want a third person.

[Takes hold of him.]

Marpl. I never had more mind to be gone in my life.

Miran. Come along then: if we fail in the voyage, thank yourself for taking this ill-starr'd gentleman on board.

Sir Geo. *That vessel ne'er can unsuccessful prove,
Whose freight is beauty, and whose pilot's Love.*

The End of the FOURTH ACT.

ACT V. SCENE Sir Francis Gripe's.

Enter Miranda, Patch, and Scentwell.

Miran. **W**ELL, Patch, I have done a strange bold thing: my fate is determin'd, and expectation is no more. Now, to avoid the impertinence and roguery of an old man, I have thrown myself into the extravagance of a young one: if he should despise, slight, or use me ill, there's no remedy from a husband but the grave; and that's a terrible sanctuary to one of my age and constitution.

Patch. O! fear not, Madam, you'll find your account in Sir George Airy: it is impossible a man of sense should use a woman ill, endued with beauty, wit, and fortune. It must be the lady's fault, if she does not wear the unfashionable name of wife easy, when nothing but complaisance and good humour is requisite on either side to make them happy.

Miran. I long till I am out of this house, lest any accident should bring my guardian back. Scentwell, put my best jewels into the little casket, slip them into thy pocket, and let us march off to Sir Jealous's.

Scentw. It shall be done, Madam. [Exit Scentwell.]

Patch. Sir George will be impatient, Madam: if their plot succeeds, we shall be well received; if not, he

he will be able to protect us. Besides, I long to know how my young lady fares.

Miran. Farewel, old *Mannon*, and thy detested walls: 'twill be no more, sweet Sir Francis; I shall be compell'd to the odious task of dissembling no longer to get my own, and coax him with the wheedling names of my Precious, my Dear, dear Gardee. O heavens!

Enter Sir Francis behind.

Sir Fran. Ah! my sweet Chargee, don't be frighted. [*She starts.*] But thy poor Gardee has been abus'd, cheated, fool'd, betray'd. But nobody knows by whom.

Miran. Undone! past redemption. [*Aside.*

Sir Fran. What! won't you speak to me, Chargee?

Miran. I am so surpriz'd with joy to see you, I know not what to say.

Sir Fran. Poor dear girl! but do ye know that my son, or some such rogue, to rob or murder me, or both, contriv'd this journey? for upon the road I met my neighbour Squeezum well, and coming to town.

Miran. Good lack! good lack! what tricks are there in this world!

Enter Scentwell, with a diamond necklace in her hand, not seeing Sir Francis.

Scentw. Madam, be pleas'd to tie this necklace on, for I can't get into the— [*Seeing Sir Francis.*

Miran. The wench is a fool, I think! Could you not have carried it to be mended, without putting it in the box?

Sir Fran. What's the matter?

Miran. Only, Dearee, I bid her, I bid her—Your ill usage has put every thing out of my head. But won't you go, Gardee, and find out these fellows, and have them punished: and, and—

Sir Fran. Where should I look them, child? No, I'll fit me down contented with my safety, nor stir out of my own doors, till I go with thee to a parson.

Miran. [*Aside.*] If he goes into his closet, I am ruin'd. Oh! bless me, in this fright I had forgot Mrs. Patch.

Patch. Ay, Madam, and I stay for your speedy answer.

Miran. [*Afide.*] I must get him out of the house. Now assist me, Fortune.

Sir Fran. Mrs. Patch, I profess I did not see you: How dost thou do, Mrs. Patch? Well, don't you repent leaving my Chargee?

Patch. Yes, every body must love her——but I come now——Madam, what did I come for? My invention is at the last ebb. [*Afide to Miranda.*]

Sir Fran. Nay, never whisper: tell me.

Miran. She came, dear Gardee, to invite me to her lady's wedding, and you shall go with me, Gardee: 'tis to be done this moment to a Spanish merchant. Old Sir Jealous keeps on his humour; the first minute he sees her, the next he marries her.

Sir Fran. Ha, ha, ha! I'd go if I thought the sight of matrimony wou'd tempt Chargee to perform her promise: there was a smile, there was a consenting look with those pretty twinklers, worth a million. Ods precious, I am happier than the Great Mogul, the Emperor of China, or all the potentates that are not in wars. Speak, confirm it, make me leap out of my skin.

Miran. When one has resolv'd, 'tis in vain to stand, shall I? shall I? if ever I marry, positively this is my wedding day.

Sir Fran. O happy, happy man! ——— Verily I will beget a son the first night shall disinheret that dog Charles. I have estate enough to purchase a barony, and be the immortalizing the whole family of the Gripes.

Miran. Come then, Gardee, give me thy hand: let's to this house of Hymen.

My choice is fixt, let good or ill betide;

Sir Fran. *The joyful bridegroom I,*

Miran. *And I the happy bride.*

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter Sir Jealous, meeting a servant.

Serv. Sir, here's a couple of gentlemen enquire for

for you : one of them calls himself Signior Diego Babinetto.

Sir Jea. Ha ! Signior Babinetto ! Admit 'em instantly — Joyful minute ! I'll have my daughter marry'd to-night.

Enter Charles in a Spanish habit, with Sir George drest like a merchant.

Sir Jea. Senior, beso las manos. vuestra merced es muy bien venido en esta tierra.

Cha. Senior, soy muy humilde, y muy obligado Cryado de vuestra merced : mi padre embia a vuestra merced, los mas profundos de sus respetos ; y a cimmissionada este Mercadel Ingles, de concluyr un negocio, que me haze el mas dichoso hombre del mundo, baxiando me su yerno.

Sir Jea. I am glad on't, for I find I have lost much of my Spanish. Sir, I am your most humble servant. Signior Don Diego Babinetto has informed me, that you are commission'd by Signior Don Pedro, &c. his worthy father —

Sir Geo. To see an affair of marriage consummated between a daughter of yours and Signior Diego Babinetto his son here. True, Sir, such a trust is repos'd in me, as that letter will inform you. I hope 'twill pass upon him. [*Aside.*] [*Gives him a letter.*]

Sir Jea. Ay, 'tis his hand. [*Seems to read.*]

Sir Geo. Good—you have counterfeited to a nicety, Charles. [*Aside to Charles.*]

Cha. If the whole plot succeeds as well, I'm happy.

Sir Jea. Sir, I find by this, that you are a man of honour and probity : I think, Sir, he calls you Meanwell.

Sir Geo. Meanwell is my name, Sir.

Sir Jea. A very good name, and very significant.

Cha. Yes, faith, if he knew all. [*Aside.*]

Sir Jea. For to mean well is to be honest, and to be honest is the virtue of a friend, and a friend is the delight and support of human society.

Sir Geo. You shall find that I'll discharge the part of a friend in what I have undertaken, Sir Jealous.

Cha.

Cha. But little does he think to whom. [Aside.]

Sir Geo. Therefore, Sir, I must intreat the presence of your fair daughter, and the assistance of your chaplain; for Signior Don Pedro strictly enjoin'd me to see the marriage rites perform'd as soon as we should arrive, to avoid the accidental overtures of Venus.

Sir Jea. Overtures of Venus!

Sir Geo. Ay, Sir; that is, those little hawking females that traverse the Park and the Play-house; to put off their damag'd ware—They fasten upon foreigners like leeches, and watch their arrival as carefully as the Kentish men do a shipwreck. I warrant you they have heard of him already.

Sir Jea. Nay, I know this town swarms with them.

Sir Geo. Ay, and then you know the Spaniards are naturally amorous, but very constant: the first face fixes 'em; and it may be very dangerous to let him ramble ere he is tied.

Cha. Well hinted.

[Aside.]

Sir Jea. Pat to my purpose—Well, Sir, there is but one thing more, and they shall be married instantly.

Cha. Pray Heaven that one thing more don't spoil all!

[Aside.]

Sir Jea. Don Pedro writ me word, in his last but one, that he design'd the sum of five thousand crowns by way of jointure for my daughter; and that it should be paid into my hand upon the day of marriage.

Cha. Oh! the Devil.

[Aside.]

Sir Jea. In order to ledge it in some of our funds, in case she should become a widow, and return for England.

Sir Geo. Pox on't, this is an unlucky turn. What shall I say?

[Aside.]

Sir Jea. And he does not mention one word of it in this letter.

Cha. I don't know how he should.

Sir Geo. Humph! True, Sir Jealous, he told me such a thing, but, but, but, but—he, he, he, he—he did not imagine that you would insist upon the very day; for,

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for, for, for money, you know, is dangerous returning by sea, an, an, an, an——

Cha. Zounds, say we have brought it in commodities.

[*Aside to Sir George.*]

Sir Geo. And so, Sir, he has sent it in merchandize, tobacco, sugars, spices, lemons, and so forth, which shall be turn'd into money with all expedition: in the mean time, Sir, if you please to accept of my bond for performance——

Sir Jea. It is enough, Sir: I am so pleas'd with the countenance of Signior Diego, and the harmony of your name, that I'll take your word, and will fetch my daughter this moment. Within there! [*Enter servant.*] Desire Mr. Tackum, my neighbour's chaplain, to walk hither.

Serv. Yes, Sir.

[*Exit.*]

Sir Jea. Gentlemen, I'll return in an instant. [*Exit.*]

Cha. Wond'rous well, let me embrace thee.

Sir Geo. Egad that five thousand crowns had like to have ruined the plot.

Cha. But that's over! And if Fortune throws no more rubs in our way——

Sir Geo. Thou'lt carry the prize—But hift, here he comes.

Enter Sir Jealous, dragging in Isabinda.

Sir Jea. Come along, you stubborn baggage you, come along.

Isab. Oh, hear me, Sir! hear me but speak one word! Do not destroy my everlasting peace: My soul abhors this Spaniard you have chose, Nor can I wed him without being curst.

Sir Jea. How's that!

Isab. Let this posture move your tender nature.

[*Kneels.*]

For ever will I hang upon these knees,
Nor loose my hands till you cut off my hold,
If you refuse to hear me, Sir.

Cha. Oh! that I could discover myself to her! [*Aside.*]

Sir Geo. Have a care what you do. You had better trust to his obstinacy.

[*Aside.*]

Sir Jea.

Sir Jea. Did you ever see such a perverse slut? Off, I say. Mr. Meanwell, pray help me a little.

Sir Geo. Rise, Madam, and do not disoblige your father, who has provided a husband worthy of you, one that will love you equal with his soul, and one that you will love, when once you know him.

Isab. Oh! never, never.
 Could I suspect that falsehood in my heart,
 I would this moment tear it from my breast,
 And straight present him with the treacherous part.

Cha. O my charming, faithful dear! [*Afide.*]

Sir Jea. Falsehood! Why, who the devil are you in love with? Don't provoke me, for by St. Iägo I shall beat you, housewife.

Cha. Heaven forbid! for I shall infallibly discover myself if he should.

Sir Geo. Have patience, Madam! and look at him: Why will ye prepossess yourself against a man that is master of all the charms you would desire in a husband?

Sir Jea. Ay, look at him, Isabinda: *Senior pase vind adelante.*

Cha. My heart bleeds to see her grieve, whom I imagin'd would with joy receive me. *Seniora oblique me vuestra merced de su mano.*

Sir Jea. [*Pulling up her head.*] Hold up your head, hold up your head, huffy, and look at him: Is there a properer, handsomer, better-shap'd fellow in England, ye jade you? Ha! see, see the obstinate baggage shuts her eyes: by St. Iägo, I have a good mind to beat 'em out. [*Pushes her down.*]

Isab. Do, then, Sir, kill me, kill me instantly.
 'Tis much the kinder action of the two;
 For 'twill be worse than death to wed him.

Sir Geo. Sir Jealous, you are too passionate. Give me leave, I'll try, by gentle words, to work her to your purpose.

Sir Jea. I pray do, Mr. Meanwell, I pray do: she'll break my heart. [*Weeps.*] There is in that, jewels of the value of three thousand pounds, which were her mother's, and a paper wherein I have settled one half of

of my estate upon her now, and the whole when I die ; but provided she marries this gentleman ; else by St. Iago I'll turn her out of doors to beg or starve. Tell her this, Mr. Meanwell, pray do. *[Walks off.]*

Sir Geo. Ha ! this is beyond expectation—Trust to me, Sir, I'll lay the dangerous consequence of disobeying you at this juncture before her, I warrant you.

Cha. A sudden joy runs thro' my heart like a propitious omen. *[Aside.]*

Sir Geo. Come, Madam, do not blindly cast your life away, just in the moment you would wish to save it.

Isab. Pray, cease your trouble, Sir ; I have no wish but sudden death to free me from this hated Spaniard. If you are his friend, inform him what I say : my heart is given to another youth, whom I love with the same strength of passion that I hate this Diego ; with whom if I am forc'd to wed, my own hand shall cut the Gordian knot.

Sir Geo. Suppose this Spaniard, which you strive to shun, should be the very man to whom you'd fly ?

Isab. Ha !

Sir Geo. Would you not blame your rash resolve, and curse your eyes that would not look on Charles ?

Isab. On Charles ! ' Oh, you have inspir'd new life, ' and collected every wandering sense.' Where is he ? Oh ! let me fly into his arms. *[Rises.]*

Sir Geo. Hold, hold, hold. 'Sdeath, Madam, you'll ruin all ; your father believes him to be Signior Babinetto : compose yourself a little, pray, Madam.

[He runs to Sir Jealous.]

Cha. Her eyes declare she knows me. *[Aside.]*

Sir Geo. She begins to hear reason, Sir ; the fear of being turned out of doors has done it.

[Runs back to Isabinda.]

Isab. 'Tis he ; O my ravish'd soul !

Sir Geo. Take heed, Madam, you don't betray yourself. Seem with reluctance to consent, or you are undone ; *[Runs to Sir Jealous.]* speak gently to her, Sir ; I'm sure she'll yield ; I see it in her face.

Sir Jea. Well, Isabinda, can you refuse to bless a father,

ther, whose only care is to make you happy, as Mr. Meanwell has inform'd you? Come, wipe thy eyes; nay, pr'ythee do, or thou wilt break thy father's heart: see, thou bring'st the tears in mine, to think of thy undutiful carriage to me. [Weeps.]

Isab. Oh! do not weep, Sir; your tears are like a poignard to my soul: do with me what you please, I am all obedience.

Sir Jea. Ha! then thou art my child again.

Sir Geo. 'Tis done, and now, friend, the day's thy own.

Cha. The happiest of my life, if nothing intervene.

Sir Jea. And wilt thou love him?

Isab. I will endeavour it, Sir.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Sir, here is Mr. Tackum.

Sir Jea. Shew him into the parlour.—*Senior tome wind sueipora; cette momento les junta les manos.*

[Gives her to Charles.]

Cha. 'Oh transport!'—*Senior, yo la recibo como se deve un tesoro tan grande.* 'O my joy, my life, my soul!'

[Embrace.]

Isab. My faithful, everlasting comfort.

Sir Jea. Now, Mr. Meanwell, let's to the parson,

Who, by his art, will join this pair for life,

Make me the happiest father, but the happiest wife.

[Exit.]

SCENE changes to the street before Sir Jealous's door.

Enter Marplot, solus.

Marpl. I have hunted all over the town for Charles, but can't find him; and by Whisper's scouting at the end of the street, I suspect he must be in the house again. I am inform'd, too, that he has borrowed a Spanish habit out of the Play House: What can it mean?

Enter a Servant of Sir Jealous's to him out of the house.

Hark'e, Sir, do you belong to this house?

Serv. Yes, Sir.

Marpl.

Marpl. Pray can you tell me if there be a gentleman in it, in a Spanish habit?

Serv. There's a Spanish gentleman within, that is just a going to marry my young lady, Sir.

Marpl. Are you sure he is a Spanish gentleman?

Serv. I'm sure he speaks no English, that I hear of.

Marpl. Then that can't be him I want; for 'tis an English gentleman, tho' I suppose he may be dress'd like a Spaniard, that I enquire after.

Serv. Ha! Who knows but this may be an impostor? I'll inform my master; for if he should be impos'd upon, he'll beat us all round. [*Afide.*] Pray, come in, Sir, and see if this be the person you enquire for.

SCENE changes to the inside of the house.

Enter Marplot.

Marpl. So, this was a good contrivance: if this be Charles, now he will wonder how I found him out.

Enter Servant and Sir Jealous.

Sir Jea. What is your earnest business, blockhead, that you must speak with me before the ceremony's past? Ha! who's this?

Serv. Why, this gentleman, Sir, wants another gentleman in a Spanish habit, he says.

Sir Jea. In a Spanish habit! 'tis some friend of Signior Don Diego's, I warrant. Sir, I suppose you would speak with Signior Babinetto—

Marpl. Hey day! what the Devil does he say now!—Sir, I don't understand you.

Sir Jea. Don't you understand Spanish, Sir?

Marpl. Not I, indeed, Sir.

Sir Jea. I thought you had known Signior Babinetto.

Marpl. Not I, upon my word, Sir.

Sir Jea. What then, you'd speak with his friend, the English merchant, Mr. Meanwell?

Marpl. Neither, Sir, not I.

Sir Jea. Why, who are you, then, Sir? And what do you want? [*In an angry tone.*]

Marpl. Nay, nothing at all, not I, Sir. Pox on him! I wish I were out, he begins to exalt his voice, I shall be beaten again.

Sir

Sir Jea. Nothing at all, Sir! Why, then, what business have you in my house? ha!

Serv. You said you wanted a gentleman in a Spanish habit.

Marpl. Why, ay, but his name is neither Babinetto nor Meanwell.

Sir Jea. What is his name, then, firrah? ha! Now I look at you again, I believe you are the rogue that threatened me with half a dozen myrmidons—Speak, Sir, who is it you look for? or, or——

Marpl. A terrible old dog!——Why, Sir, only, an honest young fellow of my acquaintance—I thought that here might be a ball, and that he might have been here in a masquerade: 'tis Charles, Sir Francis Gripe's son, because I know he us'd to come hither sometimes.

Sir Jea. Did he so?—Not that I know of, I'm sure. Pray heaven that this be Don Diego—If I should be trick'd now——Ha! my heart misgives me plaguily—Within there! stop the marriage——Run, firrah, call all my servants! I'll be satisfied that this is Signior Pedro's son, ere he has my daughter.

Marpl. Ha! Sir George! What have I done now?
Enter Sir George with a drawn sword between the scenes,

Sir Geo. Ha! Marplot here—Oh the unlucky dog—What's the matter, Sir Jealous?

Sir Jea. Nay, I don't know the matter, Mr. Meanwell.

Marpl. Upon my soul, Sir George——

[*Going up to Sir George,*

Sir Jea. Nay, then, I'm betray'd, ruin'd, undone: thieves, traitors, rogues! [*Offers to go in.*] Stop the marriage, I say——

Sir Geo. I say go on, Mr. Tackum.——Nay, no entering here; I guard this passage, old gentleman: the act and deed were both your own, and I'll see 'em sign'd, or die for't.

Enter Servants.

Sir Jea. A pox on the act and deed!—Fall on, knock him down.

Sir Geo. Ay, come on, scoundrels: I'll prick your jackets for you.

Sir

THE BUSY BODY. 69

Sir Jea. Zounds, Sirrah, I'll be reveng'd on you.

[Beats Marplot.]

Sir Geo. Ay, there your vengeance is due. Ha, ha!

Marpl. Why, what do you beat me for? I han't marry'd your daughter.

Sir Jea. Rascals! why don't you knock him down?

Serv. We are afraid of his sword, Sir: if you'll take that from him, we'll knock him down presently.

Enter Charles and Isabinda.

Sir Jea. Seize her, then.

Cha. Rascals, retire, she's my wife: touch her if you dare; I'll make dog's meat of you.

Sir Jea. Ah! downright English—Oh, oh, oh, oh!

Enter Sir Francis Gripe, Miranda, Patch, Scentwell, and Whisper.

Sir Fran. Into the house of joy we enter without knocking: — Ha! I think 'tis the house of sorrow, Sir Jealous.

Sir Jea. O Sir Francis! are you come? What, was this your contrivance, to abuse, trick, and chouse me out of my child!

Sir Fran. My contrivance! What do you mean?

Sir Jea. No, you don't know your son there in a Spanish habit?

Sir Fran. How! my son in a Spanish habit. Sirrah, you'll come to be hang'd; get out of fight, ye dog! get out of my fight.

Sir Jea. Get out of your fight, Sir! Get out with your bags: let's see what you'll give him now to maintain my daughter on.

Sir Fran. Give him! he shall be never the better for a penny of mine—and your might have look'd after your daughter better, Sir Jealous. Trick'd, quotha: Egad, I think you design'd to trick me: But look ye, gentlemen, I believe I shall trick you both. This lady is my wife, do you see? And my estate shall descend only to the heirs of her body.

Sir Geo. Lawfully begotten by me—I shall be extremely obliged to you, Sir Francis.

Sir Fran. Ha, ha, ha, ha! poor Sir George! You see

see your project was of no use. Does not your hundred pound stick in your stomach? Ha, ha, ha!

Sir Geo. No, faith, Sir Francis, this lady has given me a cordial for that. *[Takes her by the hand.]*

Sir Fran. Hold, Sir, you have nothing to say to this lady.

Sir Geo. Nor you nothing to do with my wife, Sir.

Sir Fran. Wife, Sir!

Miran. Ay really, Guardian, 'tis even so. I hope you'll forgive my first offence.

Sir Fran. What have you chous'd me out of my consent, and your writings then, mistress, ha!

Miran. Out of nothing but my own, Guardian.

Sir Jea. Ha, ha, ha! 'tis some comfort at least to see you are over-reach'd as well as myself. Will you settle your estate upon your son, now?

Sir Fran. He shall starve first.

Miran. That I have taken care to prevent. There, Sir, are the writings of your uncle's estate, which have been your due these three years. *[Gives Charles papers.]*

Cha. I shall study to deserve this favour.

Sir Fran. What have you robb'd me too, mistress! Egad I'll make you restore 'em——Huffy, I will so.

Sir Jea. Take care I don't make you pay the arrears, Sir. 'Tis well it's no worse, since 'tis no better. Come, young man, seeing thou hast outwitted me, take her, and bless you both.

Cha. I hope, Sir, you'll bestow your blessing too, 'tis all I'll ask. *[Kneels.]*

Sir Fran. Confound you all! *[Exit.]*

Marpl. Mercy upon us, how he looks!

Sir Geo. Ha, ha, ha! ne'er mind his curses, Charles; thou'lt thrive not one jot the worse for 'em. Since this gentleman is reconcil'd, we are all made happy.

Sir Jea. I always lov'd precaution, and took care to avoid dangers. But when a thing was past, I ever had philosophy to be easy.

Cha. Which is the true sign of a great soul: I lov'd your daughter, and she me, and you shall have no reason to repent her choice.

Isab. You will not blame me, Sir, for loving my own country best.

Marpl. So here's every body happy, I find, but poor Peelgarlick. I wonder what satisfaction I shall have, for being cuff'd, kick'd, and beaten in your service.

Sir Jea. I have been a little too familiar with you, as things are fallen out; but since there's no help for't, you must forgive me.

Marpl. Egad, I think so—but provided that you be not so familiar for the future.

Sir Geo. Thou hast been an unlucky rogue.

Marpl. But very honest.

Cha. That I'll vouch for; and freely forgive thee.

Sir Geo. And I'll do you one piece of service more, Marplot. I'll take care that Sir Francis make you master of your estate.

Marpl. That will make me as happy as any of you.

Patch. Your humble servant begs leave to remind you, Madam.

Isab. Sir, I hope you'll give me leave to take Patch into favour again.

Sir Jea. Nay, let your husband look to that, I have done with my care.

Cha. Her own liberty shall always oblige me. Here's no body but honest Whisper and Mrs. Scentwell to be provided for now. It shall be left to their choice to marry, or keep their services.

Whisp. Nay then, I'll stick to my master.

Scentw. Coxcomb! and I prefer my lady before a footman.

Sir Jea. Hark, I hear the music; the fiddlers smell a wedding. What say you, young fellows, will you have a dance?

Sir Geo. With all my heart; call 'em in.

A D A N C E.

Sir Jea. Now let us in and refresh ourselves with a chearful glass, in which we'll bury all animosities: And

By my example let all parents move,

And never strive to cross their childrens love;

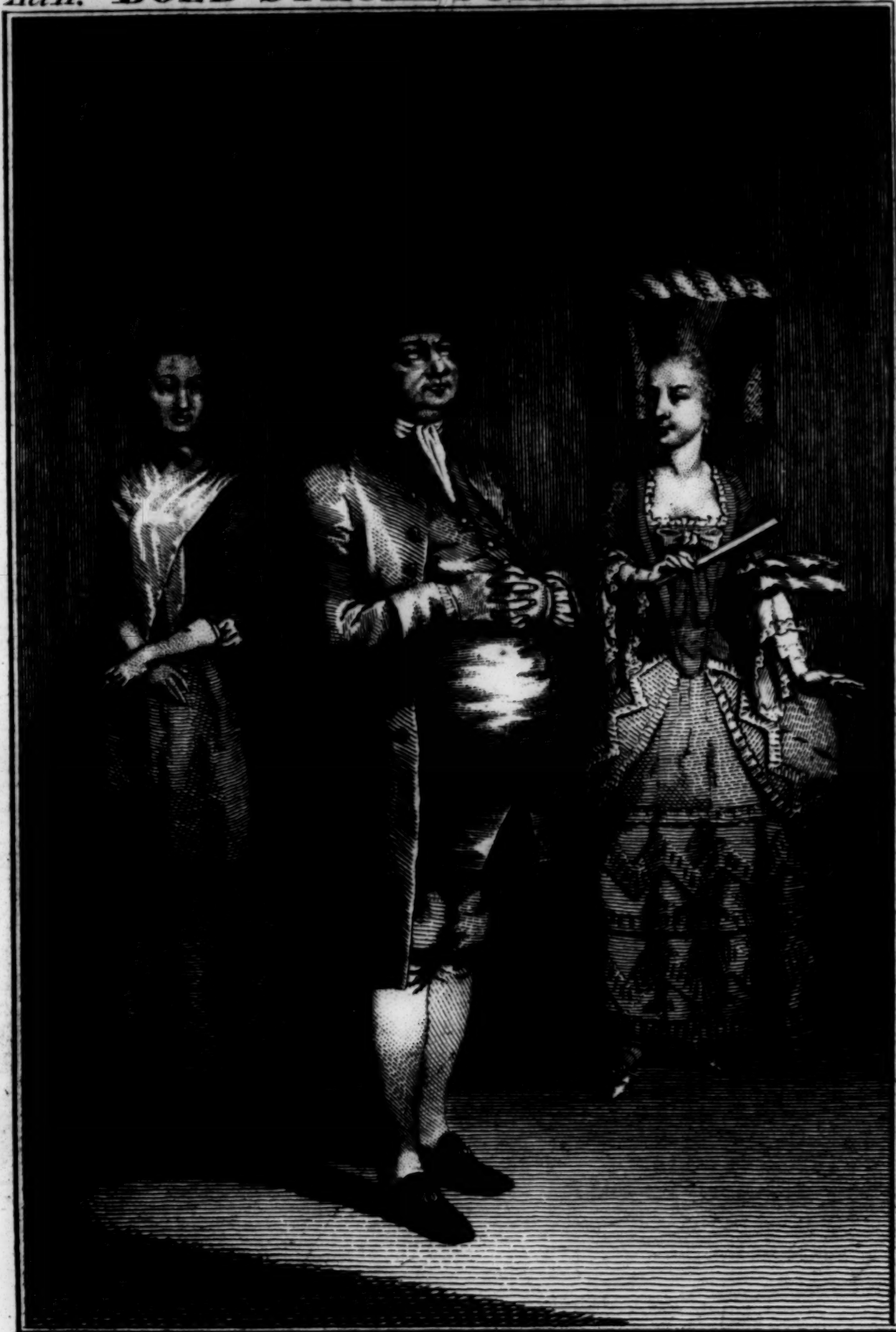
But still submit that care to Providence above.

EPILOGUE.

*IN me you see one Busy Body more;
Tho' you may have enough of one before.
With Epilogues, the Busy Body's Way,
We strive to help, but sometimes mar a play.
At this mad sessions, half condemn'd ere try'd,
Some, in three days, have been turn'd off, and dy'd.
In spite of parties their attempts are vain,
For, like false prophets, they ne'er rise again:
Too late, when cast, your favour one beseeches,
And Epilogues prove execution speeches.
Yet sure I spy no Busy Bodies here,
And one may pass, since they do ev'ry where.
Sour criticks, time, and breath, and censures waste,
And baulk your pleasures, to refine your taste:
One busy Don ill-tim'd high tenets preaches;
Another yearly shows himself in speeches:
Some sniv'ling cits would have a peace for spight,
To starve those warriors who so bravely fight;
Still of a foe upon his knees afraid,
Whose well bang'd troops want money, heart, and bread:
Old beaux, who none, not e'en themselves can please,
Are busy still, for nothing — but to tease:
The young so busy, to engage a heart,
The mischief done, are busy most to part:
Ungrateful wretches, who still cross one's will,
When they more kindly might be busy still:
One to a husband, who ne'er dreamt of horns,
Shows how dear spouse with friend his brows adorns:
Tb' officious tell-tale fool (he shou'd repent it)
Parts three kind souls that liv'd at peace contented:
Some with law quirks set Houses by the ears;
With physick one what he would heal impairs;
Like that dark mop'd up fry, that neighb'ring curse,
Who to remove love's pains bestow a worse.
Since then this meddling tribe infest the age,
Bear one a while expos'd upon the stage;
Let none but Busy Bodies vent their spight,
And, with good-humour, pleasure crown the night.*



Act II. **BOLD STROKE FOR A WIFE.** Scene 2.



Isaac Taylor ad viv. del.

Walker Sculp.

M^r SHUTER in the Character of **ORADIAH PRIM.**

*She talketh unintelligibly Sarah,
Verily it troubleth me.*

Published June 8th 1776. by T. Lowndes & Partners.

**A BOLD STROKE
FOR A WIFE.**

COMEDY,

WRITTEN BY

MRS. CENTLIVRE.

Marked with the Variations of the

PROMPTOR'S BOOK,

AT THE

Theatre-Royal in Covent-Garden.

AND VINCIT.

L O N D O N:

**PRINTED FOR T. LOWNDEN, T. CASLON,
W. NICOLL, AND S. BLADON.**

M.DCC.LXXVI,

☞ The Reader is desired to observe, that the Passages
omitted in the Representation at the Theatres are here
preserved, and marked with inverted Commas; as in
Line 18 to 27 in Page 11.

T O
His Grace P H I L I P,
Duke and Marquis of WHARTON, &c.

My Lord,
IT has ever been the custom of poets to shelter productions of this nature under the patronage of the brightest men of their time; and 'tis observed, that the Muses always met the kindest reception from persons of the greatest merit. The world will do me justice as to the choice of my patron; but will, I fear, blame my rash attempt, in daring to address your Grace, and offer at a work too difficult for our ablest pens, viz. an encomium on your Grace. I have no plea against such reflections, but the disadvantage of education, and the privilege of my sex.

If your Grace discovers a genius so surprising in this dawn of life, what must your riper years produce! your Grace has already been distinguished in a most peculiar manner, being the first young nobleman that ever was admitted into a House of Peers before he reached the age of one-and-twenty: But your Grace's judgment and eloquence soon convinced that August Assembly, that the excellent gifts of Nature ought not to be confined to time. We hope the example that Ireland has set, will shortly be followed by an English House of Lords, and your Grace made a member of that body, to which you will be so conspicuous an ornament.

Your good sense, and real love for your country, taught your Grace to persevere in the principles of your glorious ancestors, by adhering to the defender of our religion and laws; and the penetrating wisdom of your Royal Master saw you merited your honours ere he conferred them. It is one of the greatest glories of a Monarch to distinguish where to bestow his favours; and the world must do our's justice, by owning your Grace's titles most deservedly worn.

It is with the greatest pleasure imaginable, the friends of liberty see you pursuing the steps of your noble Father: Your courteous, affable temper, free from pride and ostentation, makes your name adored in the country,

and enables your Grace to carry what point you please. The late Lord Wharton will be still remembered by every lover of his country, which never felt a greater shock than what his death occasioned. Their grief had been inconsolable, if Heaven, out of its wonted beneficence to this favourite Isle, had not transmitted all his shining qualities to you, and, Phoenix-like, raised up one patriot out of the ashes of another.

That your Grace has a high esteem for learning, particularly appears by the large progress you made therein: And your love for the Muses shews a sweetness of temper, and generous humanity, peculiar to the greatness of your soul; for such virtues reign not in the breast of every man of quality.

Defer no longer then, my Lord, to charm the world with the beauty of your numbers, and shew the Poet, as you have done the Orator: convince our unthinking Britons, by what vile arts France lost her liberty; and teach them to avoid their own misfortunes, as well as to weep over Henry IV. who (if it were possible for him to know) would forgive the bold assassin's hand, for the honour of having his fall celebrated by your Grace's pen.

To be distinguished by persons of your Grace's character is not only the highest ambition, but the greatest reputation to an author; and it is not the least of my vanities, to have it known to the Public, I had your Grace's leave to prefix your name to this Comedy.

I wish I were capable to cloath the following scenes in such a dress as might be worthy to appear before your Grace, and draw your attention as much as your Grace's admirable qualifications do that of all mankind; but the Muses, like most females, are least liberal to their own sex.

All I dare say in favour of this piece, is, that the plot is entirely new, and the incidents wholly owing to my own invention; not borrowed from our own, or translated from the works of any foreign poet; so that they have at least the charm of novelty to recommend them. If they are so lucky, in some leisure hour, to give your Grace the least diversion, they will answer the utmost ambition of,

My Lord,

Your Grace's most obedient, most devoted, and
most humble servant,

SUSANNA CENTLIVRE.

P R O L O G U E.

Spoken by Mrs. THURMOND.

*T*O-night we come upon a bold design,
To try to please without one borrow'd line ;
Our plot is new and regularly clear,
And not one single tittle from Moliere.
O'er buried poets we with caution tread,
And parish sextons leave to rob the dead.
For you, bright British Fair, in hopes to charm ye,
We bring to-night a lover from the army ;
You know the soldiers have the strangest arts,
Such a proportion of prevailing parts, }
You'd think that they rid post to womens hearts.
I wonder whence they draw their bold pretence ;
We do not chuse them sure for our defence :
That plea is both impolitic and wrong,
And only suits such dames as want a tongue.
Is it their eloquence and fine address ?
The softness of their language ?——Nothing less.
Is it their courage, that they bravely dare
To storm the sex at once?——Egad! 'tis there :
They act by us as in the rough campaign,
Unmindful of repulses, charge again :
They mine and countermine, resolv'd to win,
And, if a breach is made,—they will come in.
You'll think, by what we have of soldiers said,
Our female wit was in the service bred :
But she is to the hardy toil a stranger,
She loves the cloth indeed, but hates the danger :
Yet to this circle of the brave and gay, }
She bid one, for her good intentions say,
She hopes you'll not reduce her to half-pay.
As for our play, 'tis English humour all :
Then will you let our manufacture fall ?
Would you the honour of our nation raise,
Keep English Credit up, and English Plays.

Dramatis Personæ, 1776.

M E N.

Colonel Fainwell, in love with Miss Lovely	—	At Drury Lane.	Covent Garden.
Sir Philip Modelove, an old beau	—	Mr. KING.	Mr. WOODWARD.
Periwinkle, a kind of silly Virtuoso	—	Mr. BADDELEY.	Mr. BOOTHE.
Tradelove, a change-broker	—	Mr. PARSONS.	Mr. QUICK.
Obadiah Prim, a quaker, hostler	—	Mr. HURST.	Mr. DUNSTALL.
Freeman, the Colonel's friend, a merchant	—	Mr. MOODY.	Mr. SHUTER.
Simon Pure, a quaking preacher	—	Mr. PACKER.	Mr. WHITEFIELD.
Mr. Sackbut, a vintner	—	Mr. BRANSBY.	Mr. WEWITZER.
			Mr. FEARON.

W O M E N.

Miss Lovely, a fortune of thirty thousand pounds	—	Miss YOUNGE.	Miss MACKLIN.
Mrs. Prim, wife to Prim the hostler	—	Mrs. BRADSHAW.	Mrs. PITT.
Betty, servant to Miss Lovely	—	Mrs. LOVE.	Mrs. EVANS.

A

BOLD STROKE FOR A WIFE.

ACT I. SCENE a Tavern.

Colonel Fainwell and Freeman, over a Bottle.

Freeman. COME, Colonel, his Majesty's health. —You are as melancholy as if you were in love! I wish some of the Beauties of Bath han't snapt your heart.

Col. Why faith, Freeman, there is something in't; I have seen a lady at Bath, who has kindled such a flame in me, that all the waters there can't quench.

Free. Women, like some poisonous animals, carry their antidote about 'em—Is she not to be had, Colonel?

Col. That's a difficult question to answer; however, I resolve to try: perhaps you may be able to serve me; you merchants know one another.—The lady told me herself she was under the charge of four persons.

Free. Odso! 'tis Miss Anne Lovely.

Col. The same—Do you know her?

Free. Know her! ay,—Faith, Colonel, your condition is more desperate than you imagine: Why, she is the talk and pity of the whole town: and it is the opinion of the learned, that she must die a maid.

Col. Say you so? That's somewhat odd, in this charitable city.—She's a woman, I hope?

Free. For aught I know,—but it had been as well for her, had Nature made her any other part of the creation. The man who keeps this house serv'd her father: he is a very honest fellow, and may be of use to you: we'll send for him to take a

glass with us: he'll give you her whole history, and 'tis worth your hearing.

Col. But may one trust him?

Free. With your life: I have obligations enough upon him, to make him do any thing: I serve him with wine. [Knocks.]

Col. Nay, I know him very well myself. I once used to frequent a club that was kept here.

Enter Drawer.

Drawer. Gentlemen, d'ye call?

Free. Ay; send up your master.

Drawer. Yes, Sir. [Exit.]

Col. Do you know any of this lady's guardians, Freeman?

Free. I know two of them very well.

Enter Sackbut.

Free. Here comes one will give you an account of them all.—Mr. Sackbut, we sent for you to take a glass with us. 'Tis a maxim among the friends of the bottle, that as long as the master is in company, one may be sure of good wine.

Sack. Sir, you shall be sure to have as good wine as you send in.—Colonel, your most humble servant; you are welcome to town.

Col. I thank you, Mr. Sackbut.

Sack. I am as glad to see you, as I should a hundred tun of French claret custom-free.—My service to you, Sir, [Drinks.] You don't look so merry as you used to do; ar'n't you well, Colonel?

Free. He has got a woman in his head, landlord: can you help him?

Sack. If 'tis in my power, I shan't scruple to serve my friend.

Col. 'Tis one perquisite of your calling.

Sack. Ay, at t'other end of the town, where you officers use, women are good forcers of trade: a well-customed house, a handsome bar-keeper, with clean obliging drawers, soon get the master an estate; but our citizens seldom do any thing but cheat within the walls.—But as to the lady, Colonel, point you

you at particulars? or have you a good Champagne stomach? Are you in full pay, or reduc'd, Colonel?

Col. Reduc'd, reduc'd, landlord!

Free. To the miserable condition of a lover!

Sack. Pish! that's preferable to half-pay: a woman's resolution may break before the peace: push her home, Colonel, there's no parlying with the fair sex.

Col. Were the lady her own mistress, I have some reasons to believe I should soon command in chief.

Free. You know Miss Lovely, Mr. Sackbut.

Sack. Know her! Ay, poor Nancy: I have carried her to school many a frosty morning. Alas! if she's the woman, I pity you, Colonel: her father, my old master, was the most whimsical, out-of-the-way temper'd man I ever heard of, as you will guess by his last will and testament.—This was his only child: and I have heard him wish her dead a thousand times.

Col. Why so?

Sack. He hated posterity, you must know, and wish'd the world were to expire with himself.—He used to swear, if she had been a boy, he would have qualified him for the opera.

Free. 'Twas a very unnatural resolution in a father.

Sack. He died worth thirty thousand pounds, which he left to his daughter, provided she married with the consent of her guardians; but that she might be sure never to do so, he left her in the care of four men, as opposite to each other as the four elements: each has his quarterly rule, and three months in a year she is oblig'd to be subject to each of their humours, and they are pretty different, I assure you.—She is just come from Bath.

Col. 'Twas there I saw her.

Sack. Ay, Sir, the last quarter was her Beau Guardian's.—She appears in all public places during his reign.

Col. She visited a lady who boarded in the same house with me: I liked her person, and found an

opportunity to tell her so. She replied, she had no objection to mine; but if I could not reconcile contradictions, I must not think of her, for that she was condemned to the caprice of four persons, who never yet agreed in any one thing, and she was obliged to please them all.

Sack. 'Tis most true, Sir: I'll give you a short description of the men, and leave you to judge of the poor lady's condition. One is a kind of virtuoso, a silly half-witted fellow, but positive and surly, fond of every thing antique and foreign, and wears his cloaths of the fashion of the last century; doats upon travellers, and believes more of Sir John Mandeville than he does of the Bible.

Col. That must be a rare odd fellow!

Sack. Another is a change-broker: a fellow that will out-lie the Devil for the advantage of stock, and cheat his father that got him in a bargain: he is a great stickler for trade, and hates every man that wears a sword.

Free. He is a great admirer of the Dutch management, and swears they understand trade better than any nation under the sun.

Sack. The third is an old beau, that has May in his fancy and dress, but December in his face and his heels: he admires all the new fashions, and those must be French; loves operas, balls, masquerades, and is always the most tawdry of the whole company on a birth-day.

Col. These are pretty opposite to one another, truly: and the fourth, what is he, landlord?

Sack. A very rigid Quaker, whose quarter began this day.—I saw Miss Lovely go in, not above two hours ago,—Sir Philip set her down. What think you now, Colonel, is not the poor lady to be pitied?

Col. Ay, and rescu'd too, landlord.

Free. In my opinion, that's impossible.

Col. There is nothing impossible to a lover. What would not a man attempt for a fine woman and thirty

thirty thousand pounds? Besides, my honour is at stake: I promised to deliver her, and she bid me win her and wear her.

Sack. That's fair, faith!

Free. If it depended upon knight-errantry, I should not doubt your setting free the damsel; but to have avarice, impertinence, hypocrisy, and pride, at once to deal with, requires more cunning than generally attends a man of honour.

Col. My fancy tells me, I shall come off with glory. I resolve to try, however.—Do you know all the guardians, Mr. Sackbut?

Sack. Very well, they all use my house.

Col. And will you assist me, if occasion requires?

Sack. In every thing I can, Colonel.

Free. I'll answer for him; and whatever I can serve you in, you may depend on. 'I know Mr. Periwinkle and Mr. Tradelove; the latter has a very great opinion of my interest abroad.—I happened to have a letter from a correspondent two hours before the news arrived of the French King's death: I communicated it to him: upon which he bought all the stock he could, and what with that, and some wagers he laid, he told me he had got to the tune of five hundred pounds; so that I am much in his good graces.'

Col. I don't know but you may be of service to me, Freeman.

Free. If I can, command me, Colonel.

Col. Isn't possible to find a suit of cloaths ready made at some of these sale-shops fit to rig out a beau, think you, Mr. Sackbut?

Sack. O hang 'em—No, Colonel, they keep nothing ready made that a gentleman would be seen in; but I can fit you with a suit of cloaths, if you'd make a figure.—Velvet and gold brocade—They were pawn'd to me by a French count, who had been stript at play, and wanted money to carry him home; he promised to send

‘ for them, but I have not heard any thing of him.

‘ *Free.* He has not fed upon frogs long enough yet to recover his loss: ha, ha!

‘ *Col.* Ha, ha! Well, the cloaths will do, Mr. Sackbut,—tho’ we must have three or four fellows in tawdry liveries: they can be procur’d, I hope.

‘ *Free.* Egad! I have a brother come from the West Indies that match you; and, for expedition-sake, you shall have his servants: there’s a Black, a Tawney-moor, and a Frenchman: they don’t speak one word of English, so can make no mistake.

‘ *Col.* Excellent! — Egad! I shall look like an Indian Prince.’

Col. First I’ll attack my Beau Guardian: where lives he?

Sack. Faith somewhere about St. James’s; tho’ to say in what street, I cannot; but any chairman will tell you where Sir Philip Modelove lives.

Free. Oh! you’ll find him in the Park at eleven every day; at least I never pass through at that hour without seeing him there.—But what do you intend?

Col. To address him in his own way, and find what he designs to do with the lady.

Free. And what then?

Col. Nay, that I can’t tell; but I shall take my measures accordingly.

Sack. Well, ’tis a mad undertaking, in my mind; but here’s to your success, Colonel. [*Drinks.*]

Col. ’Tis something out of the way, I confess; but Fortune may chance to smile, and I succeed.—Come, landlord, let me see those cloaths. Freeman, I shall expect you’ll leave word with Mr. Sackbut, where one may find you upon occasion; and send me my Indian equipage immediately, d’ye hear?

Free. Immediately.

Col.

*Col. Bold was the man who ventur'd first to sea,
But the first vent'ring lovers bolder were.
The path of love's a dark and dang'rous way,
Without a landmark, or one friendly star,
And he that runs the risque deserves the fair.*

[Exeunt.]

SCENE II. Prim's House.

Enter Miss Lovely, and her maid Betty.

Betty. Bless me, Madam! why do you fret and teaze yourself so? This is giving them the advantage with a witness.

Miss Lov. Must I be condemned all my life to the preposterous humours of other people, and pointed at by every boy in town?—Oh! I could tear my flesh, and curse the hour I was born—Isn't it monstrously ridiculous, that they should desire to impose their quaking dress upon me at these years? When I was a child, no matter what they made me wear, but now—

Betty. I would resolve against it, Madam: I'd see 'em hang'd before I'd put on the pinch'd cap again.

Miss Lov. Then I must never expect one moment's ease: she has rung such a peal in my ears already, that I shan't have the right use of them this month.—What can I do?

Betty. What can you *not* do, if you will but give your mind to it? Marry, Madam.

Miss Lov. What! and have my fortune go to build churches and hospitals?

Betty. Why, let it go.—If the Colonel loves you, as he pretends, he'll marry you without a fortune, Madam; and I assure you a Colonel's lady is no despicable thing: 'a Colonel's post will maintain you like a gentlewoman, Madam.'

Miss Lov. So you would advise me to give up my own fortune, and throw myself upon the Colonel's!

Betty. I would advise you to make yourself easy, Madam.

Miss Lov. That's not the way, I'm sure. No,
no,

no, girl, there are certain ingredients to be mingled with matrimony, without which I may as well change for the worse as the better. When the woman has fortune enough to make the man happy, if he has either honour or good manners, he'll make her easy. Love makes but a slovenly figure in a house where Poverty keeps the door.

Betty. And so you resolve to die a maid, do you, Madam?

Miss Lov. Or have it in my power to make the man I love master of my fortune.

Betty. Then you don't like the Colonel so well as I thought you did, Madam, or you would not take such a resolution.

Miss Lov. It is because I do like him, Betty, that I do take such a resolution.

Betty. Why do you expect, Madam, the Colonel can work miracles? Is it possible for him to marry you with the consent of all your guardians?

Miss Lov. Or he must not marry me at all: and so I told him; and he did not seem displeased with the news.—He promised to set me free; and I, on that condition, promised to make him master of that freedom.

Betty. Well! I have read of enchanted castles, ladies deliver'd from the chains of magic, giants kill'd, and monsters overcome; so that I shall be the less surprized if the Colonel should conjure you out of the power of your four guardians: if he does, I am sure he deserves your fortune.

Miss Lov. And shall have it, girl, if it were ten times as much—For I'll ingenuously confess to thee, that I do like the Colonel above all the men I ever saw:—There's something so *jantée* in a soldier, a kind of *je ne sçai quoi* air, that makes them more agreeable than the rest of mankind.—They command regard, as who shall say, We are your defenders. We preserve your beauties from the insults of rude and unpolish'd foes, and ought to be preferr'd before those lazy indolent mortals, who, by dropping
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into their fathers estates, set up their coaches, and think to rattle themselves into our affections.

Betty. Nay, Madam, I confess that the army has engrossed all the prettiest fellows—A laced coat and a feather have irresistible charms.

Miss Lov. But the Colonel has all the beauties of the mind as well as the body.—O all ye Powers that favour happy lovers, grant that he may be mine! Thou God of Love, if thou be'st aught but name, assist my Fainwell!

*Point all thy darts to aid his just design,
And make his plots as prevalent as thine.* [Exit.

ACT II. SCENE the Park.

Enter Colonel finely dress'd, three footmen after him.

Col. SO, now if I can but meet this beau!—Egad! methinks, I cut a smart figure, and have as much of the tawdry air as any Italian Count or French Marquée of them all.—Sure I shall know this Knight again—Ah! yonder he sits, making love to a mask, i'faith, I'll walk up the Mall, and come down by him. [Exit.

Scene draws, and discovers Sir Philip upon a bench, with a woman mask'd.

Sir Phil. Well, but, my dear, are you really constant to your keeper?

Wom. Yes, really, Sir,—Hey day! Who comes yonder? He cuts a mighty figure.

Sir Phil. Ha! a stranger, by his equipage keeping so close at his heels.—He has the appearance of a man of quality—Positively French, by his dancing air.

Wom. He crosses, as if he meant to sit down here.—

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11 A BOLD STROKE

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Wom. He crosses, as if he meant to sit down here.—

Sir Phil. He has a mind to make love to thee, child.

Enter

Enter Colonel.

Wom. It will be to no purpose if he does.

Sir Phil. Are you resolved to be cruel then?

Col. You must be very cruel indeed, if you can deny any thing to so fine a gentleman, Madam.

[Takes out his watch.]

Wom. I never mind the outside of a man.

Col. And I'm afraid thou art no judge of the inside.

Sir Phil. I am positively of your mind, Sir; for creatures of her function seldom penetrate beyond the pocket.

Wom. Creatures of your composition have, indeed, generally more in their pockets than in their heads. *[Aside.]*

Sir Phil. Pray what says your watch? mine is down. *[Pulling out his watch.]*

Col. I want thirty-six minutes of twelve, Sir. —

[Puts up his watch, and takes out his snuff-box.]

Sir Phil. May I presume, Sir?

Col. Sir, you honour me. *[Presenting the box.]*

Sir Phil. He speaks good English—tho' he must be a foreigner. *[Aside.]*—This snuff is extremely good—and the box prodigious fine: the work is French, I presume, Sir.

Col. I bought it in Paris, Sir. — I do think the workmanship pretty neat.

Sir Phil. Neat! 'tis exquisitely fine. Sir. Pray, Sir, if I may take the liberty of enquiring—what country is so happy to claim the birth of the finest gentleman in the universe? France, I presume.

Col. Then you don't think me an Englishman?

Sir Phil. No, upon my soul, don't I.

Col. I am sorry for't.

Sir Phil. Impossible you should wish to be an Englishman! Pardon me, Sir, this island could not produce a person of such alertness.

Col. As this mirror shews you, Sir.

[Puts up a pocket-glass to Sir Philip's face.]

Wom. Coxcombs! I'm sick to hear them praise one

one another. One seldom gets any thing by such animals ; not even a dinner, unless one can dine upon soup and celery.

Sir Phil. O gad, Sir!—Will you leave us, Madam? Ha, ha!

Col. She fears 'twill be only losing time to stay here, ha, ha!—I know not how to distinguish you, Sir; but your mien and address speak you right honourable.

Sir Phil. Thus great souls judge of others by themselves—I am only adorn'd with knighthood: that's all, I assure you, Sir: my name is Sir Philip Modelove.

Col. Of French extraction?

Sir Phil. My father was French.

Col. One may plainly perceive it—There is a certain gaiety peculiar to my nation (for I will own myself a Frenchman) which distinguishes us every where.—A person of your figure would be a vast addition to a coronet.

Sir Phil. I must own I had the offer of a barony about five years ago, but I abhor'd the fatigue which must have attended it.—I could never yet bring myself to join with either party.

Col. You are perfectly in the right, Sir Philip—a fine person should not embark himself in the slovenly concern of politics: Dress and pleasure are objects proper for the soul of a fine gentleman.

Sir Phil. And love——

Col. Oh! that's included under the article of pleasure.

Sir Phil. *Parbleu! il est un Homme d'Esprit*, I must embrace you—[*Rises and embraces.*]—Your sentiments are so agreeable to mine, that we appear to have but one soul, for our ideas and conception are the same.

Col. I should be sorry for that. [*Aside.*]—You do me too much honour, Sir Philip.

Sir Phil. Your vivacity and *jantée* mien assured me 'at first sight there was nothing of this foggy

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‘foggy island in your composition.’ May I crave your name, Sir?

Col. My name is La Fainwell, Sir, at your service.

Sir Phil. The La Fainwells are French, I know; tho’ the name is become very numerous in Great Britain of late years—I was sure you was French the moment I laid my eyes upon you; I could not come into the supposition of your being an Englishman: This island produces few such ornaments.

Col. Pardon me, Sir Philip, this island has two things superior to all nations under the sun.

Sir Phil. Ah! what are they?

Col. The ladies, and the laws.

Sir Phil. The laws, indeed, do claim a preference of other nations—but, by my soul, there are fine women every where.—I must own I have felt their power in all countries.

Col. There are some finish’d beauties, I confess, in France, Italy, Germany, nay, even in Holland, *mais elles sont bien rare*: But *les Belles Angloises*. Oh, Sir Philip, where find we such women! such symmetry of shape! such elegance of dress! such regularity of features! such sweetness of temper! such commanding eyes! and such bewitching smiles!

Sir Phil. Ah! *parbleu, vous êtes attrapé!*

Col. Non, *je vous assure, Chevalier*.—But I declare there is no amusement so agreeable to my goût, as the conversation of a fine woman.—I could never be prevailed upon to enter into what the vulgar calls the pleasure of the bottle.

Sir Phil. My own taste, *positivement!*—A ball, or a masquerade, is certainly preferable to all the productions of the vineyard.

Col. Infinitely! I hope the people of quality in England will support that branch of pleasure, which was imported with their peace, and since naturaliz’d by the ingenious Mr. *Heidegger*.

Sir Phil. The ladies assure me it will become part of the constitution—upon which I subscrib’d

‘ a hundred guineas.—It will be of great service to
‘ the public, at least to the company of surgeons;
‘ and the city in general.

‘ *Col.* Ha, ha! it may help to ennoble the blood
‘ of the city.’ Are you married, Sir Philip?

‘ *Sir Phil.* No; nor do I believe I ever shall enter
into that honourable state: I have an absolute
tendre for the whole sex.

‘ *Col.* That’s more than they have for you, I dare
swear. [Aside.

‘ *Sir Phil.* And I have the honour to be very
‘ well with the ladies, I can assure you, Sir; and
‘ I won’t affront a million of fine women to make
‘ one happy.

‘ *Col.* Nay, marriage is reducing a man’s taste to
‘ a kind of half pleasure; but then it carries the
‘ blessings of peace along with it: one goes to sleep
‘ without fear, and wakes without pain.

‘ *Sir Phil.* There’s something of that in’t: a wife
‘ is a very good dish for an English stomach—but
‘ gross feeding, for nicer palates, ha, ha, ha!’

‘ *Col.* I find I was very much mistaken—I ima-
gined, you had been married to that young lady
whom I saw in the chariot with you this morning
in Gracechurch-street.

‘ *Sir Phil.* Who, Nancy Lovely? I am a piece of a
guardian to that lady: You must know, her father,
I thank him, joined me with three of the most pre-
posterous old fellows—that, upon my soul, I am in
pain for the poor girl:—she must certainly lead
apes, as the saying is: ha, ha!

‘ *Col.* That’s pity, Sir Philip. If the lady would
give me leave, I would endeavour to avert that curse.

‘ *Sir Phil.* As to the lady, she’d gladly be rid of
‘ us at any rate, I believe; but here’s the mischief:
‘ he who marries Miss Lovely, must have the con-
‘ sent of us all four—or not a penny of her por-
‘ tion.—For my part, I shall never approve of any
‘ but a man of figure—and the rest are not only
‘ averse to cleanliness, but have each a peculiar
‘ taste.

'taste to gratify.'—For my part, I declare I would prefer you to all the men I ever saw.

Col. And I her to all women——

Sir Phil. I assure you, Mr. Fainwell, I am for marrying her, for I hate the trouble of a guardian; especially among such wretches; but resolve never to agree to the choice of any one of them—and I fancy they'll be even with me, for they never came into any proposal of mine yet.

Col. I wish I had your leave to try them, Sir Philip.

Sir Phil. With all my soul, Sir: I can refuse a person of your appearance nothing.

Col. Sir, I am infinitely obliged to you.

Sir Phil. But do you really like matrimony?

Col. I believe I could with that lady.

Sir Phil. The only point in which we differ.—But you are master of so many qualifications, that I can excuse one fault: for I must think it a fault in a fine gentleman; and that you are such, I'll give it under my hand.

Col. I wish you'd give me your consent to marry Miss Lovely under your hand, Sir Philip.

Sir Phil. I'll do't, if you'll step into St. James's Coffee-House, where we may have pen and ink—tho' I can't foresee what advantage my consent will be to you, without you could find a way to get the rest of the guardians.—But I'll introduce you, however: She is now at a quaker's, where I carried her this morning, when you saw us in Gracechurch-street.—I assure you she has an odd *ragout* of guardians, as you will find when you hear the characters, which I'll endeavour to give you as we go along.—Hey! Pierre, Jaque, Renno.—Where are you all, scoundrels?—Order the chariot to St. James's Coffee-House.

Col. *Le Noir, la Brun, la Blanc.*—*Morbleu, où sont ces coquins là? Allons, Monsieur le Chevalier.*

Sir Phil. Ah! *Pardonnez moi, Monsieur.*

Col. Not one step, upon my soul, Sir Philip.

Sir Phil.

Sir Phil. The best bred man in Europe, positively. *[Exit.]*

SCENE changes to Obadiah Prim's House.

Enter Miss Lovely, followed by Mrs. Prim.

Mrs. Pr. Then thou wilt not obey me: And thou dost really think those fallals become thee?

Miss Lov. I do, indeed.

Mrs. Prim. Now will I be judged by all sober people, if I don't look more like a modest woman than thou dost, Anne.

Miss Lov. More like a hypocrite you mean, Mrs. Prim.

Mrs. Pr. Ah! Anne, Anne, that wicked Philip Modelove will undo thee.—Satan so fills thy heart with pride, during the three months of his guardianship, that thou becomest a stumbling-block to the upright.

Miss Lov. Pray who are they? Are the pinch'd cap and formal hood the emblems of sanctity? Does your virtue consist in your dress, Mrs. Prim?

Mrs. Pr. It doth not consist in cut hair, spotted face, and a bare neck.—Oh the wickedness of the generation! the primitive women knew not the abomination of hoop'd petticoats.

Miss Lov. No; nor the abomination of cant neither: Don't tell me, Mrs. Prim, don't.—I know you have as much pride, vanity, self-conceit, and ambition among you, couched under that formal habit, and sanctified countenance, as the proudest of us all; but the world begins to see your prudery.

Mrs. Pr. Prudery! What! do they invent new words as well as new fashions? Ah! poor fantastic age, I pity thee.—Poor deluded Anne, which dost thou think most resemblest the saint, and which the sinner, thy dress or mine? Thy naked bosom allureth the eye of the bye-stander—encourageth the frailty of human nature—and corrupteth the soul with evil longings.

Miss Lov. And pray who corrupted your son Tobias

bias with evil longings? Your maid Tabitha wore a handkerchief, and yet he made the saint a sinner.

Mrs. Pr. Well, well, spit thy malice. I confess Satan did buffet my son Tobias, and my servant Tabitha: the evil spirit was at that time too strong, and they both became subject to its workings—not from any outward provocation,—but from an inward call:—he was not tainted with the rottenness of the fashions, nor did his eyes take in the drunkenness of beauty.

Miss Low. No! that's plainly to be seen.

Mrs. Pr. Tabitha is one of the faithful: he fell not with a stranger.

Miss Low. So! Then you hold wenching no crime, provided it be within the pale of your own tribe.—You are an excellent casuist, truly!

Enter Obadiah Prim.

Ob. Pr. Not stripp'd of thy vanity yet, Anne! Why dost thou not make her put it off, Sarah?

Mrs. Pr. She will not do it.

Ob. Pr. Verily, thy naked breasts troubleth my outward man: I pray thee hide 'em, Anne: put on an handkerchief, Anne Lovely.

Miss Lovely. I hate handkerchiefs when 'tis not cold weather, Mr. Prim.

Mrs. Pr. I have seen thee wear a handkerchief, nay, and a mask to boot, in the middle of July.

Miss Low. Ay, to keep the sun from scorching me.

Ob. Pr. If thou could'st not bear the sun-beams, how dost thou think man can bear thy beams? Those breasts inflame desire: let them be hid, I say.

Miss Low. Let me be quiet, I say.—Must I be tormented thus for ever?—Sure no woman's condition ever equalled mine! Foppery, Folly, Avarice and Hypocrisy are, by turns, my constant companions—and I must vary shapes as often as a player—I cannot think my father meant this tyranny! No, you usurp an authority which he never intended you should take.

Ob.

Ob. Pr. Hark thee, dost thou call good counsel tyranny? Do I, or my wife, tyrannize, when we desire thee in all love to put off thy tempting attire and veil thy provokers to sin?

Miss Lov. Deliver me, good Heaven! or I shall go distracted. *[Walks about.]*

Mrs. Pr. So! now thy pinnars are tost, and thy breasts pulled up!—verily they were seen enough before.——Fie upon the filthy taylor who made thy stays.

Miss Lov. I wish I were in my grave! Kill me rather than treat me thus.

Ob. Pr. Kill thee! ha, ha! thou thinkest thou art acting some lewd play sure:—Kill thee! Art thou prepared for death, Anne Lovely? No, no, thou would'st rather have a husband, Anne:——Thou wantest a gilt coach, with fix lazy fellows behind, to flant it in the ring of vanity, among the princes and rulers of the land——who pamper themselves with the fatness thereof; but I will take care that none shall squander away thy father's estate: thou shalt marry none such, Anne.

Miss Lov. Would you marry me to one of your own canting sect?

Ob. Pr. Yea, verily, no one else shall ever get my consent, I do assure thee, Anne.

Miss Lov. And I do assure thee, Obadiah, that I will as soon turn Papist, and die in a convent.

Mrs. Pr. O wickedness!

Miss Lov. O stupidity!

Ob. Pr. O blindness of heart!

Miss Lov. Thou blinder of the world, don't provoke me—lest I betray your sanctity, and leave your wife to judge of your purity:——What were the emotions of your spirit—when you squeez'd Mary by the hand last night in the pantry,——when she told you, you bus'd so filthily? Ah! you had no aversions to naked bosoms, when you begged her to shew you a little, little, little bit

bit of her delicious bosom: — Don't you remember those words, Mr. Prim?

Mrs. Pr. What does she say, Obadiah?

Ob. Pr. She talketh unintelligibly, Sarah. Which way did she hear this? This should not have reach'd the ears of the wicked ones: — Verily it troubleth me. *[Aside.*

Enter Servant.

Serv. Philip Modelove, whom they call Sir Philip, is below, and such another with him, shall I send them up?

Ob. Pr. Yea. *[Exit.*

Enter Sir Philip and Colonel.

Sir Phil. How dost thou do, Friend Prim? Odsso! my She friend here too! What are you documenting Miss Nancy? reading her a lecture upon the pinch'd coif, I warrant ye!

Mrs. Pr. I am sure thou didst never read her any lecture that was good. — My flesh riseth so at these wicked ones, that prudence adviseth me to withdraw from their sight. *[Exit.*

Col. Oh! that I could find means to speak with her! How charming she appears! I wish I could get this letter into her hand. *[Aside.*

Sir Phil. Well, Miss Cockey, I hope thou hast got the better of them.

Miss Lov. The difficulties of my life are not to be surmounted, Sir Philip. — I hate the impertinence of him, as much as the stupidity of the other. *[Aside.*

Ob. Pr. Verily, Philip, thou wilt spoil this maiden.

Sir Phil. I find we still differ in opinion; but that we may none of us spoil her, prithee, Prim, let us consent to marry her. — I have sent for our brother guardians to meet me here about this very thing. — Madam, will you give me leave to recommend a husband to you? — Here's a gentleman, whom, in my mind, you can have no objection to.

[Presents the Colonel to her, she looks another way. Miss

Miss Low. Heaven deliver me from the formal, and the fantastic fool!

Col. A fine woman,——a fine horse, and fine equipage, are the finest things in the universe: And if I am so happy to possess you, Madam, I shall become the envy of mankind, as much as you out-shine your whole sex.

[*As he takes her hand to kiss it, he endeavours to put a letter into it; she lets it drop—Prim takes it up.*]

Miss Low. I have no ambition to appear conspicuously ridiculous, Sir. [Turning from him.]

Col. So fail the hopes of Fainwell.

Miss Low. Ha! Fainwell! 'tis he! What have I done? Prim has the letter, and it will be discover'd. [Aside.]

Ob. Pr. Friend, I know not thy name, so cannot call thee by it; but thou seest thy letter is unwelcome to the maiden, she will not read it.

Miss Low. Nor shall you; [Snatches the letter.] I'll tear it in a thousand pieces, and scatter it, as I will the hopes of all those that any of you shall recommend to me. [Tears the letter.]

Sir Phil. Ha! Right woman, faith!

Col. Excellent woman! [Aside.]

Ob. Pr. Friend, thy garb savoureth too much of the vanity of the age for my approbation; nothing that resembleth Philip Modelove shall I love, mark that——therefore, friend Philip, bring no more of thy own apes under my roof.

Sir Phil. I am so entirely a stranger to the monsters of thy breed, that I shall bring none of them I am sure.

Col. I am likely to have a pretty task by that time I have gone thro' them all; but she's a city worth taking, and 'egad I'll carry on the siege: if I can but blow up the out-works, I fancy I am pretty secure of the town. [Aside.]

Enter Servant.

Serv. Toby Periwinkle and Thomas Tradelove demand to see thee. [To Sir Philip.]

B

Sir Phil.

Sir Phil. Bid them come up.

Miss Lov. Deliver me from such an inundation of noise and nonsense. — Oh Fainwell! whatever thy contrivance be, prosper it Heaven; — ‘but oh! I fear thou never canst redeem me.’ [Exit.

Sir Phil. *Sic transit gloria mundi.*

Enter Mr. Periwinkle and Tradelove.

These are my brother guardians, Mr. Fainwell. — pr’ythee observe the creatures. [Aside to Col.

Trade. Well, Sir Philip, I obey your summons.

Per. Pray, what have you to offer for the good of Miss Lovely, Sir Philip?

Sir Phil. First I desire to know what you intend to do with that lady? Must she be sent to the Indies for a venture — or live an old maid, and then be enter’d amongst your curiosities, and shewn for a monster, Mr. Periwinkle?

Col. Humph, curiosities, that must be the virtuosos. [Aside.

Per. Why, what wou’d you do with her?

Sir Phil. I would recommend this gentleman to her for a husband, Sir — a person whom I have pick’d out from the whole race of mankind.

Ob. Pr. I would advise thee to shuffle him again with the rest of mankind, for I like him not.

Col. Pray, Sir, without offence to your formality, what may be your objections?

Ob. Pr. Thy person; thy manners; thy dress; thy acquaintance; — thy every thing, friend.

Sir Phil. You are most particularly obliging, friend, ha, ha!

Trade. What business do you follow, pray, Sir?

Col. Humph, by that question he must be the broker. [Aside.] — Business, Sir! the business of a gentleman.

Trad. That is as much as to say, you dress fine, feed high, lie with every woman you like, and pay your surgeon’s bills better than your taylor’s, or your butcher’s.

Col. The court is much obliged to you, Sir, for your character of a gentleman.

Trad.

Trad. The court, Sir! What would the court do without us citizens?

Sir Phil. Without your wives and daughters, you mean, Mr. Tradelove.

Per. Have you ever travell'd, Sir?

Col. That question must not be answer'd now — In books I have, Sir.

Per. In books! That's fine travelling indeed! — Sir Philip, when you present a person I like, he shall have my consent to marry Miss Lovely; 'till when, your servant. *[Exit.*

Col. I'll make you like me before I have done with you, or I am mistaken. *[Aside.*

Trad. And when you can convince me that a beau is more useful to my country than a merchant, you shall have mine; 'till then you must excuse me. *[Exit.*

Col. So much for trade—I'll fit you too. *[Aside.*

Sir Phil. In my opinion, this is very inhuman treatment, as to the Lady, Mr. Prim.

Ob. Pr. Thy opinion and mine happen to differ as much as our occupations, friend: business requireth my presence, and folly thine; and so I must bid thee farewell. *[Exit.*

Sir Phil. Here's breeding for you, Mr. Fainwell! — Gad take me.

Half my estate I'd give to see 'em bit.

Col. *I hope to bite you all, if my plot bit.* *[Exeunt.*

ACT III. SCENE the Tavern.

Sackbut and the Colonel in an Egyptian dress.

Sack. **A** Lucky beginning, Colonel—you have got the old beau's consent.

Col. Ay, he's a reasonable creature; but the other three will require some pains. — Shall I pass upon him, think you? 'Egad, in my mind, I look as antique as if I had been preserved in the Ark.

Sack. Pass upon him! ay, ay, as roundly as

white wine dafh'd with sack does for mountain and sherry, if you have assurance enough—

Col. I have no apprehension from that quarter; assurance is the cockade of a soldier.

Sack. Ay, but the assurance of a soldier differs much from that of a traveller.—Can you lye with a good grace?

Col. As heartily, when my mistress is the prize, as I would meet the foe when my country call'd, and king commanded: so don't you fear that part: if he don't know me again, I am safe.—I hope he'll come.

Sack. I wish all my debts would come as sure: I told him you had been a great traveller, had many valuable curiosities, and was a person of a most singular taste: he seem'd transported, and begg'd me to keep you till he came.

Col. Ay, ay, he need not fear my running away.—Let's have a bottle of sack, landlord, our ancestors drank sack.

Sack. You shall have it.

Col. And whereabouts is the trap-door you mentioned?

Sack. There's the conveyance, Sir. [Exit.

Col. Now, if I should cheat all these roguish guardians, and carry off my mistress in triumph, it would be what the French call a *grand coup d'eclat*.—Odso! here comes Periwinkle.—
Ah! duce take this beard; pray Jupiter it does not give me the slip, and spoil all.

Enter Sackbut with wine, and Periwinkle following.

Sack. Sir, this gentleman hearing you have been a great traveller, and a person of fine speculation, begs leave to take a glass with you: he is a man of a curious taste himself.

Col. The gentleman has it in his face and garb; Sir, you are welcome.

Per. Sir, I honour a traveller and men of your enquiring disposition; the oddness of your habit pleases

pleases me extremely: 'tis very antique, and for that I like it.

Col. 'Tis very antique, Sir:—this habit once belonged to the famous Claudius Ptolemeus, who lived in the year one hundred and thirty-five.

Sack. If he keeps up to the sample, he shall lye with the devil for a bean-stack, and win it every straw. [*Aside.*

Per. A hundred and thirty-five! why, that's prodigious now!—Well, certainly 'tis the finest thing in the world to be a traveller.

Col. For my part I value none of the modern fashions a fig leaf.

Per. No more don't I, Sir: I had rather be the jest of a fool, than his favourite.—I am laugh'd at here for my singularity.—This coat, you must know, Sir, was formerly wore by that ingenious and very learned person, Mr. John Tradescant of Lambeth.

Col. John Tradescant! Let me embrace you, Sir—John Tradescant was my uncle, by my mother's-side; and I thank you for the honour you do his memory: he was a very curious man indeed.

Per. Your uncle, Sir—Nay, then 'tis no wonder that your taste is so refined; why you have it in your blood.—My humble service to you, Sir; to the immortal memory of John Tradescant, your never-to-be-forgotten uncle. [*Drinks.*

Col. Give me a glass, landlord.

Per. I find you are primitive, even in your wine: Canary was the drink of our wise forefathers; 'tis balsamic, and saves the charge of 'pothecaries cordials—Oh! that I had lived in your uncle's days! or rather, that he were now alive;—Oh! how proud he'd be of such a nephew!

Sack. Oh pox! that would have spoil'd the jest. [*Aside.*

Per. A person of your curiosity must have collected many rarities.

Col. I have some, Sir, which are not yet come ashore; as, an Egyptian idol.

Per. Pray what may that be?

Col. It is, Sir, a kind of an ape, which they formerly worshipp'd in that country: I took it from the breast of a female mummy.

Per. Ha, ha! our women retain part of their idolatry to this day, for many an ape lies on a lady's breast, ha, ha! —

Sack. A smart old thief.

[*Afide.*

Col. Two tusks of an Hippotamus, two pair of Chinese nut-crackers, and one Egyptian mummy.

Per. Pray, Sir, have you never a crocodile?

Col. Humph! the boatswain brought one with a design to shew it, but touching at Rotterdam, and hearing it was no rarity in England, he sold it to a Dutch poet.

Sack. The devil's in that nation, it rivals us in every thing.

Per. I should have been very glad to have seen a living crocodile.

Col. My genius led me to things more worthy of regard. — Sir, I have seen the utmost limits of this globular world; I have seen the sun rise and set; know in what degree of heat he is at noon, to the breadth of a hair, and what quantity of combustibles he burns in a day, and how much of it turns to ashes, and how much to cinders.

Per. To cinders! You amaze me, Sir: I never heard that the sun consum'd any thing. — Descartes tells us —

Col. Descartes, with the rest of his brethren, both ancient and modern, knew nothing of the matter. — I tell you, Sir, that Nature admits an annual decay, tho' imperceptible to vulgar eyes. — Sometimes his rays destroy below, sometimes above. — You have heard of blazing comets, I suppose.

Per. Yes, yes, I remember to have seen one, and our astrologers tell us of another which will happen very quickly.

Col. Those comets are little islands bordered on the sun, which at certain times are set on fire by that

‘ luminous body’s moving over them perpendic-
‘ larly, which will one day occasion a general con-
‘ flagration.

‘ Sack. One need not scruple the Colonel’s ca-
‘ pacity, faith ! [Aside.]

‘ Per. This is marvellous strange ! These cinders
‘ are what I never read of in any of our learned
‘ dissertations.

‘ Col. I don’t know how the Devil you should. [Aside.]

‘ Sack. He has it at his fingers ends : one would
‘ swear he had learn’d to lye at school, he does it
‘ so cleverly. [Aside.]

‘ Per. Well ! you travellers see strange things !
‘ Pray, Sir, have you any of those cinders ?

‘ Col. I have, among my other curiosities.

‘ Per. Oh, what have I lost for want of travel-
‘ ling ! Pray, what have you else ?

‘ Col. Several things worth your attention.—I
‘ have a muff made of the feathers of those geese
‘ that sav’d the Roman Capitol.

‘ Per. Is’t possible ?

‘ Sack. Yes, if you are such a gander as to be-
‘ lieve him. [Aside.]

‘ Col. I have an Indian leaf, which, open, will
‘ cover an acre of land, yet folds up in so little a
‘ compass, you may put it into your snuff-box.

‘ Sack. Humph ! That’s a thunderer. [Aside.]

‘ Per. Amazing !

‘ Col. Ah ! mine is but a little one ; I have seen
‘ some of them that would cover one of the Car-
‘ ribbee Islands.

‘ Per. Well, if I don’t travel before I die, I shan’t
‘ rest in my grave—Pray, what do the Indians
‘ with them ?

‘ Col. Sir, they use them in their wars for tents,
‘ the old women for riding-hoods, the young for
‘ fans and umbrellas.

‘ Sack. He has a fruitful invention. [Aside.]

‘ Per. I admire our East-India Company imports

' none of them; they would certainly find their account in them.

' Col. Right, if they could find the leaves. [*Afide.*]

—— Look ye, Sir, do you see this little phial?

Per. Pray you what is it?

Col. This is call'd *Polufloboio*.

Per. *Polufloboio*! — It has a rumbling sound.

Col. Right, Sir; it proceeds from a rumbling nature. — This water was part of those waves which bore Cleopatra's vessel when she sail'd to meet Anthony.

Per. Well, of all that ever travelled, none had a taste like you.

Col. But here's the wonder of the world. — This, Sir, is called *Zona*, or *Moros Musphonon*; the virtues of this are inestimable.

Per. *Moros Musphonon*! What in the name of wisdom can that be? — to me it seems a plain belt.

Col. This girdle has carried me all the world over.

Per. You have carried it, you mean.

Col. I mean as I say, Sir. — Whenever I am girded with this, I am invisible; and by turning this little screw, can be in the court of the Great Mogul, the Grand Signior, and King George, in as little time as your cook can poach an egg.

Per. You must pardon me, Sir, I can't believe it.

Col. If my landlord pleases, he shall try the experiment immediately.

Sack. I thank you kindly, Sir; but I have no inclination to ride post to the Devil.

Col. No, no, you shan't stir a foot, I'll only make you invisible.

Sack. But if you could not make me visible again.

Per. Come, try it upon me, Sir, I am not afraid of the Devil, nor all his tricks. — 'Sbud, I'll stand 'em all.

Col. There, Sir, put it on. — Come, landlord, you and I must face the east. [*They turn about.*]
Is it on, Sir?

Per.

Per. 'Tis on. [*They turn about again.*]

Sack. Heaven protect me! Where is he?

Per. Why here, just where I was.

Sack. Where, where, in the name of virtue? Ah, poor Mr. Periwinkle!—Egad, look to't, you had best, Sir; and let him be seen again, or I shall have you burnt for a wizard.

Col. Have patience, good landlord.

Per. But really don't you see me now?

Sack. No more than I see my grandmother, that died forty years ago.

Per. Are you sure you don't lie? Methinks I stand just where I did, and see you as plain as I did before.

Sack. Ah! I wish I could see you once again.

Col. Take off the girdle, Sir. [*He takes it off.*]

Sack. Ah, Sir, I am glad to see you with all my heart. [*Embraces him.*]

Per. This is very odd; certainly there must be some trick in't.—Pray, Sir, will you do me the favour to put it on yourself?

Col. With all my heart.

Per. But first I'll secure the door.

Col. You know how to turn the screw, Mr. Sackbut.

Sack. Yes, yes,—Come, Mr. Periwinkle, we must turn full east.

[*They turn, the Colonel sinks down a trap-door.*]

Col. 'Tis done, now turn. [*They turn.*]

Per. Ha! mercy upon me; my flesh creeps upon my bones.—This must be a conjurer, Mr. Sackbut.

Sack. He is the Devil, I think.

Per. Oh, Mr. Sackbut, why do you name the Devil, when perhaps he may be at your elbow?

Sack. At my elbow! Marry, heaven forbid!

Col. Are you satisfied? [*From under the stage.*]

Per. Yes, Sir, yes—How hollow his voice sounds!

Sack. Yours seem'd just the same—Faith, I wish this girdle were mine, I'd sell wine no more. Hark

Ye, Mr. Periwinkle, [*Takes him aside till the Colonel rises again.*] if he would sell this girdle, you might travel with great expedition.

Col. But it is not to be parted with for money.

Per. I am sorry for't, Sir; because I think it the greatest curiosity I ever heard of.

Col. By the advice of a learned physiognomist in Grand Cairo, who consulted the lines in my face, I returned to England, where he told me I should find a rarity in the keeping of *four* men, which I was born to possess for the benefit of mankind; and the *first* of the *four* that gave me his consent, I should present him with this girdle—Till I have found this jewel, I shall not part with the girdle.

Per. What can that rarity be? Didn't he name it to you?

Col. Yes, Sir: he called it a chaste, beautiful, unaffected woman.

Per. Pish! women are no rarities—I never had any great taste that way. I married, indeed, to please my father, and I got a girl to please my wife; but she and the child (thank Heaven) died together—Women are the very geugaws of the creation; play-things for boys, who, when they write man, they ought to throw aside.

Sack. A fine lecture to be read to a circle of ladies!

Per. What woman is there, drest in all the pride and foppery of the times, can boast of such a fore-top as the cockatto?

Col. I must humour him—[*Aside.*]—Such a skin as the Lizzard?

Per. Such a shining breast as the Humming Bird?

Col. Such a shape as the Antelope?

Per. Or, in all the artful mixture of their various dresses, have they half the beauty of one box of butterflies?

Col. No, that must be allow'd—For my part, if it were not for the benefit of mankind, I'd have nothing

nothing to do with them, for they are as indifferent to me as a sparrow or a flesh-fly.

Per. Pray, Sir, what benefit is the world to reap from this lady?

Col. Why, Sir, she is to bear me a son, who shall revive the art of embalming, and the old Roman manner of burying the dead; and for the benefit of posterity, he is to discover the longitude, so long sought for in vain.

Per. Od! these are valuable things, Mr. Sackbut!

Sack. He hits it off admirably, and t'other swallows it like sack and sugar—[*Aside.*]—Certainly this lady must be your ward, Mr. Periwinkle, by her being under the care of *four* persons.

Per. By the description it should——'Egad, if I could get that girdle, I'd ride with the sun, and make the *tour* of the world in *four and twenty* hours. [*Aside.*] And are you to give that girdle to the *first* of the *four* guardians that shall give his consent to marry that lady, say you, Sir?

Col. I am so order'd, when I can find him.

Per. I fancy I know the very woman—her name is Anne Lovely?

Col. Excellent!—He said, indeed, that the first letter of her name was *L*.

Per. Did he really?—Well, that's prodigiously amazing, that a person in Grand Cairo should know any thing of my ward.

Col. Your ward!

Per. To be plain with you, Sir; I am one of those *four* guardians.

Col. Are you indeed, Sir? I am transported to find the man who is to possess this *Moras Mospbonon* is a person of so curious a taste—Here is a writing drawn up by that famous Egyptian, which if you will please to sign, you must turn your face full north, and the girdle is your's.

Per. If I live till this boy is born, I'll be embalm'd, and sent to the Royal Society when I die.

Col. That you shall most certainly.

Enter Drawer.

Draw. Here's Mr. Staytape, the taylor, enquires for you, Colonel.

Col. Who do you speak to, you son of a whore?

Per. Ha! Colonel.

[Aside.]

Col. Confound the blundering dog!

[Aside.]

Draw. Why, to Colonel—

Sack. Get you out, you rascal.

[Kicks him out, and goes after him.]

Draw. What the devil is the matter?

Col. This dog has ruin'd all my schemes, I see by Periwinkle's looks.

[Aside.]

Per. How finely I should have been chous'd—Colonel, you'll pardon me that I did not give you your title before—it was pure ignorance, faith it was—Pray—hem, hem! Pray, Colonel, what post had this learned Egyptian in your regiment?

Col. A pox of your sneer. *[Aside.]* I don't understand you, Sir.

Per. No, that's strange! I understand you, Colonel—An Egyptian of Grand Cairo! ha, ha, ha!—I am sorry such a well-invented tale should do you no more service—We old fellows can see as far into a millstone as them that pick it—I am not to be trick'd out of my trust—mark that.

Col. The Devil! I must carry it off, I wish I were fairly out. *[Aside.]* Look ye, Sir, you may make what jest you please—but the stars will be obey'd, Sir, and, depend upon't, I shall have the lady, and you none of the girdle.—Now for Mr. Freeman's 'part of the plot.' *[Aside.]*

[Exit.]

Per. The stars! ha, ha!—No star has favoured you, it seems—The girdle! ha, ha, ha! none of your Ledgerdmain tricks can pass upon me—Why, what a pack of trumpery has this rogue picked up—His *Pagod*, *Polusloboio*, his *Zonas*, *Moros Musphonous*, and the Devil knows what—But I'll take care—Ha, gone!—Ay, 'twas time to sneak off.—Soho! the house! *[Enter Sackbut.]* Where is this trickster? Send for a constable, I'll have this rascal before the Lord Mayor;

Mayor; I'll Grand Cairo him, with a pox to him—I believe you had a hand in putting this imposture upon me, Sackbut.

Sackbut. Who I, Mr. Periwinkle? I scorn it; I perceiv'd he was a cheat, and left the room on purpose to send for a constable to apprehend him, and endeavour to stop him when he went out—But the rogue made but one step from the stairs to the door, call'd a coach, leap'd into it, and drove away like the Devil, as Mr. Freeman can witness, who is at the bar, and desires to speak with you: he is this minute come to town.

Per. Send him in. [*Exit Sackbut.*] What a scheme this rogue has laid! How I should have been laugh'd at, had it succeeded! [*Enter Freeman booted and spurr'd.*] Mr. Freeman, 'your dress commands your welcome to town, what will you 'drink?' I had like to have been impos'd upon by the veriest rascal——

Free. I am sorry to hear it—The dog flew for't: he had not scap'd me, if I had been aware of him; Sackbut struck at him, but miss'd his blow, or he had done his business for him.

Per. I believe you never heard of such a contrivance, Mr. Freeman, as this fellow had found out.

Free. Mr. Sackbut has told me the whole story, Mr. Periwinkle; but now I have something to tell you of much more importance to yourself.—I happen'd to lie one night at Coventry, and knowing your uncle Sir Toby Periwinkle, I paid him a visit, and, to my great surprize, found him dying.

Per. Dying!

Free. Dying, in all appearance; the servants weeping, the room in darkness; the 'pothecary, shaking his head, told me the doctors had given him over; and then there are small hopes, you know.

Per. I hope he has made his will—he always told me he would make me his heir.

Free. I have heard you say as much, and there-fore

fore resolved to give you notice. I should think it would not be amiss if you went down to-morrow morning.

Per. It is a long journey, and the roads very bad.

Free. But he has a great estate, and the land very good—Think upon that.

Per. Why that's true, as you say; I'll think upon it: In the mean time, I give you many thanks for your civility, Mr. Freeman, and should be glad of your company to dine with me.

Free. I am oblig'd to be at Jonathan's Coffee-House at two, and now it is half an hour after one; if I dispatch my business, I'll wait on you; I know your hour.

Per. You shall be very welcome, Mr. Freeman, and so your humble servant. *Exit.*

Re-enter Colonel and Sackbut.

Free. Ha, ha, ha! I have done your business, Colonel, he has swallow'd the bait.

Col. I overheard all, though I am a little in the dark: I am to personate a highwayman, I suppose—that's a project I am not fond of; for though I may fright him out of his consent, he may fright me out of my life, when he discovers me, as he certainly must in the end.

Free. No, no, I have a plot for you without danger, but first we must manage Tradelove—Has the taylor brought your cloaths?

Sack. Yes, pox take the thief.

Free. Well, well, no matter, I warrant we have him yet—But now you must put on the Dutch merchant.

Col. The duce of this trading plot—I wish he had been an old soldier, that I might have attack'd him in my own way, heard him fight over all the battles of the late war—But for trade, by Jupiter, I shall never do it.

Sack. Never fear, Colonel: Mr. Freeman will instruct you.

Free. You'll see what others do: the Coffee-House will instruct you. *Col.*

Col. I must venture, however. But I have a farther plot in my head upon Tradelove, which you must assist me in, Freeman: you are in credit with him, I heard you say.

Free. I am, and will scruple nothing to serve you, Colonel.

Col. Come along then. — Now for the Dutchman — Honest Rtolomy. By your leave.

Now must bob-wig and business come in play;
A thirty-thousand-pound girl leads the way.

ACT IV. SCENE Jonathan's Coffee-house, in
'Change-alley.

A crowd of people with rolls of paper and parchment in their hands; a bar, and coffee boys waiting.

Enter Tradelove and Stock-Jobbers, with Rolls of Paper and Parchment.

1st Stock. South-sea at seven eights; who buys?

2d Stock. South-Sea bonds due at Michaelmas, 1718. Class lottery-tickets.

3d Stock. East-India bonds.

4th Stock. What all sellers and no buyers? gentlemen, I'll buy a thousand pound for Tuesday next, at three-fourths.

Coff. Boy. Fresh coffee, gentlemen, fresh coffee.

Trade. Hark ye, Gabriel, you'll pay the difference of that stock we transacted for t'other day?

Gab. Ay, Mr. Tradelove, here's a note for the money 'upon the Sword-blade company.'

Gives him a Note.

Coff. Boy. Bohea tea, gentlemen?

Enter a Man.

Man. Is Mr. Smuggle here?

1st Coff. Boy. Mr. Smuggle's not here, Sir; you'll find him at the books.

2d Stock. Ho! here comes two Sparks from t'other end of the town: what news bring they?

Enter

Enter two Gentlemen.

Trade. I would fain bite the spark in the brown coat: he comes very often into the alley, but never employs a broker.

Enter Colonel and Freeman.

2d Stock. Who does any thing in the civil-list lottery, or Caco? Zounds, where are all the Jews this afternoon? Are you a bull or a bear to-day, Abraham?

3d Stock. A bull, faith — but I have a good putt for next week.

Trade. Mr. Freeman, your servant! Who is that Gentleman?

Free. A Dutch merchant just come to England; but hark ye, Mr. Tradelove — I have a piece of news will get you as much as the French King's death did, if you are expeditious.

Free. [*Shewing him a letter.*] Read there: I received it just now from one that belongs to the Emperor's Minister.

Trade. [*Reads.*] Sir, as I have many obligations to you, I cannot miss any opportunity to shew my gratitude: this moment my Lord has receiv'd a private express, that the Spaniards have rais'd their siege from before Cagliari; if this proves any advantage to you, it will answer both the ends and wishes of, Sir, your most obliged humble Servant,

Henricus Duffeldrop.

Postscript.

In two or three hours the news will be public.

May one depend upon this, Mr. Freeman?

[*Aside to Freeman.*]

Free. You may — I never knew this person send me a false piece of news in my life.

Trade. Sir, I am much obliged to you: 'egad 'tis rare news. — Who sells South-Sea for next week?

Stock-Job. [*All together.*] I sell; I, I, I, I, I sell.

1st Stock. I'll sell 5000l. for next week, at five-eighths.

2d Stock. — I'll sell ten thousand, at five-eighths, for the same time.

Trade.

Trade. Nay, nay, hold, hold, not all together, Gentlemen: I'll be no bull, I'll buy no more than I can take: Will you sell ten thousand pounds at a half, for any day next week, except Saturday?

1st Stock. I'll sell it you, Mr. Tradelove.

Free. [*Whispers to one of the Gentlemen.*]

Gent. [*Afide.*] The Spaniards rais'd the siege of Cagliari! I don't believe one word of it.

2d Gent. Rais'd the siege! as much as you have rais'd the monument.

Free. 'Tis rais'd, I assure you, Sir.

2d Gent. What will you lay on't?

Free. What you please.

1st Gent. Why, I have a Brother upon the spot, in the Emperor's service: I am certain if there were any such thing, I should have had a letter.

2d Stock. How's this? the siege of Cagliari rais'd? — I wish it may be true, 'twill make business stir, and stocks rise.

1st Stock. Tradelove's a cunning fat bear: if this news proves true, I shall repent I sold him the five thousand pounds. — Pray, Sir, what assurance have you that's the siege is rais'd?

Free. There is come an express to the Emperor's minister.

2d Stock. I'll know that presently.

1st Gent. Let it come where it will, I'll hold you fifty pounds 'tis false.

Free. 'Tis done.

2d Gent. I'll lay you a brace of hundreds upon the same.

Free. I'll take you.

4th Stock. 'Egad, I'll hold twenty pieces 'tis not rais'd, Sir.

Free. Done with you too.

Trade. I'll lay any man a brace of thousands the siege is rais'd.

Free. The Dutch merchant is your man to take in. [*Afide to Tradelove.*]

Trade. Does he not know the news?

Free.

Free. Not a syllable; if he did, he would bet a hundred thousand pounds as soon as one penny — he's plaguy rich, and a mighty man at wagers.

[To Tradelove.

Trade. Say you so? — 'Egad, I'll bite him, if possible: — Are you from Holland, Sir?

Col. Ya, Mynheer.

Trade. Had you the news before you came away?

Col. What believe you, Mynheer?

Trade. What do I believe? Why, I believe that the Spaniards have actually rais'd the siege of Cagliari.

Col. Wat Duyvel's news is dat? 'Tis niet waer, Mynheer — 'tis no true, Sir!

Trade. 'Tis so true, Mynheer, that I'll lay you two thousand pounds upon it. — You are sure the letter may be depended upon, Mr. Freeman?

Free. Do you think I would venture my money if I were not sure of the truth of it?

[Aside to Tradelove.

Col. Two thousand pound, Mynheer, 'tis gadaach — die gentleman sal hold de gelt.

[Over Freeman's money.

Trade. With all my heart — this binds the wager.

Free. You have certainly lost, Mynheer, the siege is rais'd indeed.

Col. 'Ik geloy't niet, Mynheer Freeman, 'ik sal ye dubbeld honden, if you please.

Free. I am let into the secret, therefore won't win your money.

Trade. Ha, ha, ha! I have snapt the Dutchman's faith, ha, ha! this is no ill day's work. — Pray, may I crave your name, Mynheer?

Col. Myn Naem, Mynheer! myn naem is Jan van Timtamtirelereleeta Heer Fainwell.

Trade. Zounds, 'tis a dam'd long name, I shall never remember it — Myn Heer van, Tim, Tim, Tim, — What the Devil is it?

Free. Oh! never heed: I know the Gentleman, and will pass any word for twice the sum.

Trade.

Trade. That's enough.

Col. You'll hear of me sooner than you'll wish, old gentleman, I fancy. [*Aside.*] You'll come to Sackbut's, Freeman.

Free. Immediately. [*Aside to the Colonel.*

1st Man. Humphry Hump here?

2d Boy. Mr. Humphry Hump is not here; you'll find him upon the Dutch walk.

Trade. Mr. Freeman, I give you many thanks for your kindness.

Free. I fear you'll repent when you know all.

Trade. Will you dine with me?

Free. I'm engag'd at Sackbut's; adieu. [*Exit.*

Trade. Sir, your humble servant. Now I'll see what I can do upon 'Change with my news. [*Exeunt.*

Trade. Sir, your humble servant. Now I'll see what I can do upon 'Change with my news. [*Exeunt.*

Trade. Sir, your humble servant. Now I'll see what I can do upon 'Change with my news. [*Exeunt.*

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Trade. Sir, your humble servant. Now I'll see what I can do upon 'Change with my news. [*Exeunt.*

Trade. Sir, your humble servant. Now I'll see what I can do upon 'Change with my news. [*Exeunt.*

brought, as I always do, to see what letters are directed to my house (for she can't read, you must know) I 'spy'd this directed to Prim, so paid for it among the rest. I have given the old jade a pint of wine on purpose to delay time, till you see if the letter be of any service; then I'll seal it up again, and tell her I took it by mistake.—I have read it, and fancy you'll like the project.—Read, read, Colonel.

Col. [Reads.] Friend Prim, there is arrived from Pennsylvania one Simon Pure, a leader of the faithful, who hath sojourned with us eleven days, and hath been of great comfort to the brethren.—He intendeth for the quarterly meeting in London; I have recommended him to thy house. I pray thee treat him kindly, and let thy wife cherish him, for he's of weakly constitution—he will depart from us the third day; which is all from thy friend in the faith. Aminadab Holdfast.

Ha, ha, excellent! I understand you, landlord: I am to personate this Simon Pure, am I not?

Sack. Don't you like the hint?

Col. Admirably well!

Free. 'Tis the best contrivance in the world, if the right Simon gets not there before you—

Col. No, no, the quakers never ride post: 'he can't be here before to-morrow at soonest: do you send and buy me a quaker's dress, Mr. Sack—but; and 'suppose, *Freeman*, you should wait at the Bristol coach, that if you see any such person, you might contrive to give me notice.—

Free. I will—the country dress and boots, are they ready?

Sack. Yes, yes, every thing, Sir.

Free. 'Bring 'em in then.—[*Exit Sack.*] Thou must dispatch Periwinkle first—remember his uncle, Sir Toby Periwinkle, is an old batchelor of seventy-five—that he has seven hundred a year, most in abbey land—that he was once in love with your mother, shrewdly suspected by some to be your father.—That you have been thirty years his steward,—

steward — and ten years his gentleman — remember to improve these hints.

Col. Never fear, let me alone for that — but what's the steward's name?

Free. His name is Pillage.

Col. Enough — [Enter Sackbut with cloaths.]
Now for the country put — [Dresses.

Free. 'Egad, landlord, thou deservest to have the first night's lodging with the lady for thy fidelity: — what say you, Colonel, shall we settle a club here? you'll make one?

Col. Make one! I'll bring a set of honest officers, that will spend their money as freely to the King's health, as they would their blood in his service.

Sack. I thank you, Colonel: here! here! [Bell rings. [Exit Sackbut.

Col. 'So, now for my boots. [puts on boots.] Shall I find you here, Freeman, when I come back?

Free. Yes, — or I'll leave word with Sackbut, where he may send for me. — Have you the writings, the will — and every thing?

Col. All, all! — [Enter Sackbut.

Sack. Zounds! Mr. Freeman! yonder is Trade-love in the damned'st passion in the world. — He swears you are in the house — he says you told him you were to dine here.

Free. I did so, ha, ha, ha! he has found himself bit already. —

Col. The devil! he must not see me 'in this dress' now.

Sack. I told him I expected you here, but you were not come yet —

Free. Very well — make you haste out, Colonel, and let me alone to deal with him: Where is he?

Sack. In the King's Head.

Col. You remember what I told you?

Free. Ay, ay, very well. Landlord, let him know I am come in — and now, Mr. Pillage, success attend you. [Exit Sack.

Col. Mr. Proteus rather —

*From changing shape, and imitating Jove,
I draw the happy omens of my love.*

*I'm not the first young brother of the blade,
Who made his fortune in a masquerade.* [Exit Col.]

Enter Tradelove.

Free. Zounds! Mr. Tradelove, we're bit it seems.

Trade. Bit, do you call it, Mr. Freeman! I am ruin'd.—Pox on your news.

Free. Pox on the rascal that sent it me.

Trade. Send it you! Why Gabriel Skinfint has been at the minister's, and spoke with him, and he has assur'd him 'tis every syllable false: he received no such express.

Free. I know it: I this minute parted with my friend, who protested he never sent me any such letter.—Some roguish stock-jobber has done it on purpose to make me lose my money, that's certain: I wish I knew who he was, I'd make him repent it—I have lost 300*l.* by it.

Trade. What signifies your three hundred pounds to what I have lost? There's two thousand pounds to that Dutchman with a cursed long name, besides the stock I bought; the devil! I could tear my flesh—I must never shew my face upon 'Change more;—for, by my soul, I can't pay it.

Free. I am heartily sorry for it! What can I serve you in? Shall I speak to the Dutch merchant, and try to get you time for the payment?

Trade. Time! Ad's heart! I shall never be able to look up again.

Free. I am very much concern'd that I was the occasion, and wish I could be an instrument of retrieving your misfortune; for my own, I value it not. Adso, a thought comes into my head, that, well improv'd, may be of service.

Trade. Ah! there's no thought can be of any service to me, without paying the money, or running away.

Free. How do we know? What do you think of my proposing Miss Lowely to him? He is a single man—and I heard him say he had a mind to marry an English woman—nay, more than that, he said some-
body

body told him you had a pretty ward—he wish'd you had betted her instead of your money.

Trade. Ay, but he'd be hang'd before he'd take her instead of the money; the Dutch are too covetous for that; besides, he did not know that there were three more of us, I suppose.

Free. So much the better; you may venture to give him your consent, if he'll forgive you the wager: It is not your business to tell him that your consent will signify nothing.

Trade. That's right, as you say; but will he do it, think you?

Free. I can't tell that; but I'll try what I can do with him. — He has promis'd to meet me here an hour hence; I'll feel his pulse, and let you know: 'If I find it feasible, I'll send for you; if not, you are at liberty to take what measures you please.'

Trade. You must extol her beauty, double her portion, and tell him I have the entire disposal of her, and that she can't marry without my consent — and that I am a covetous rogue, and will never part with her without a valuable consideration.

Free. Ay, ay, let me alone for a lyn at a pinch.

Trade. 'Egad, if you can bring this to bear, Mr. Freeman, I'll make you whole again: I'll pay the three hundred pounds you lost, with all my soul.

Free. Well, I'll use my best endeavours. — Where will you be?

Trade. At home: pray Heaven you prosper! — If I were but the sole trustee now, I should not fear it. Who the devil would be a guardian;

*If, when cash runs low, our coffers I enlarge,
We can't, like other stocks, transfer our charge?*

[Exit.

Free. He, he, ha! — he has it. [Exit.

SCENE III. *Changes to Periwinkle's House.*

Enter Periwinkle on one side, and Footmen on the other.

Foot. A gentleman from Conventry enquires for you, Sir.

Per.

Per. From my uncle, I warrant you: bring him up.——This will save me the trouble, as well as the expence of a journey.

Enter Colonel.

Col. Is your name Periwinkle, Sir?

Per. It is, Sir.

Col. I am sorry for the message I bring.—My old master, whom I served these forty years, claims the sorrow due from a faithful servant to an indulgent master.

Per. By this I understand, Sir, my uncle, Sir Toby Periwinkle, is dead.

Col. He is, Sir, and he has left you heir to seven hundred a year, in as good abbey land as ever paid Peter-Pence to Rome.——I wish you long to enjoy it, but my tears will flow when I think of my benefactor.—[*Weeps.*] Ah! he was a good man—he has not left many of his fellows—the poor lament him sorely.

Per. I pray, Sir, what office bore you?

Col. I was his steward, Sir.

Per. I have heard him mention you with much respect; your name is——

Col. Pillage, Sir.

Per. Ay, Pillage, I do remember he called you Pillage.—Pray, Mr. Pillage, when did my uncle die?

Col. Monday last, at four in the morning. About two he sign'd his will, and gave it into my hands, and strictly charg'd me to leave Coventry the moment he expired; and deliver it to you with what speed I could: I have obey'd him, Sir, and there is the will. [Gives it to *Per.*]

Per. 'Tis very well, I'll lodge it in the Commons.

Col. There are two things which he forgot to insert, but charg'd me to tell you, that he desir'd you'd perform them as readily as if you had found them written in the will, which is to remove his corpse, and bury him by his father at St. Paul's Covent Garden, and to give all his servants mourning.

Per.

Per. That will be a considerable charge; a pox of all modern fashions. [*Aside.*] Well! it shall be done. Mr. Pillage, I will agree with one of death's fashion-mongers, call'd an undertaker, to go down, and bring up the body.

Col. I hope, Sir, I shall have the honour to serve you in the same station I did your worthy uncle: I have not many years to stay behind him, and would gladly spend them in the family, where I was brought up.—[*Weeps.*] He was a kind and tender master to me.

Per. Pray don't grieve, Mr. Pillage, you shall hold your place, and every thing else which you held under my uncle—You make me weep to see you so concern'd. [*Weeps.*] He liv'd to a good old age, and we are all mortal.

Col. We are so, Sir, and therefore I must beg you to sign this lease: You'll find Sir Toby has taken particular notice of it in his will—I could not get it time enough from the lawyer, or he had sign'd it before he died. [*Gives him a paper.*]

Per. A lease! for what?

Col. I rented a hundred a year of Sir Toby upon lease, which lease expires at Lady-day next. I desire to renew for twenty years—that's all, Sir.

Per. Let me see.

[*Looks over the lease.*]

Col. Matters go swimmingly, if nothing intervene.

[*Aside.*]

Per. Very well—Let's see what he says in his will about it.

[*Lays the lease upon the table, and looks on the will.*]

Col. He's very wary, yet I fancy I shall be too cunning for him.

[*Aside.*]

Per. Ho, here it is—The farm lying—now in possession of Samuel Pillage—suffer him to renew his lease—at the same rent.—Very well, Mr. Pillage. I see my uncle does mention it, and I'll perform his will. Give me the lease.—[*Col. gives it him, he looks upon it, and lays it upon the table.*] Pray you step to the door, and call for a pen and ink, Mr. Pillage.

C

Col.

Col. I have a pen and ink in my pocket, Sir, [*Pulls out an ink-born.*] I never go without that.

Per. I think it belongs to your profession.—[*He looks upon the pen, while the Col. changes the lease, and lays down the contract.*] I doubt this is but a sorry pen, tho' it may serve to write my name.

[*Writes.*

Col. Little does he think what he signs. [*Aside.*

Per. There is your lease, Mr. Pillage [*Gives him the paper.*] Now I must desire you to make what haste you can down to Coventry, and take care of every thing, and I'll send down the undertaker for the body; do you attend it up, and whatever charge you are at, I'll repay you.

Col. You have paid me already, I thank you, Sir.

[*Aside.*

Per. Will you dine with me?

Col. I would rather not: there are some of my neighbours which I met as I came along, who leave the town this afternoon, they told me, and I should be glad of their company down.

Per. Well, well, I won't detain you.

Col. I don't care how soon I am out. [*Aside.*

Per. I will give orders about mourning.

Col. You will have cause to mourn, when you know your estate imaginary only. [*Aside.*

* You'll find your hopes and care alike are vain,

* In spite of all the caution you have ta'en:

* Fortune rewards the faithful lover's pain. [*Exit.*

Per. Seven hundred a year! I wish he had died seventeen years ago:—What a valuable collection of rarities might I have had by this time!—I might have travell'd over all the known parts of the globe, and made my own closet rival the Vatican at Rome———Odsso, I have a good mind to begin my travels now———let me see—I am but sixty! My father, grandfather, and great grandfather, reach'd ninety odd;—I have almost forty years good:—Let me consider! what will seven hundred a year amount to in——ay! in thirty

years, I'll say but thirty—thirty times seven, is seven times thirty—that is—just twenty-one thousand pounds—'tis a great deal of money—I may very well reserve sixteen hundred of it for a collection of such rarities as will make my name famous to posterity—I would not die like other mortals, forgotten in a year or two, as my uncle will be—No,

*With Nature's curious works I'll raise my fame,
That men, till doom's-day, may repeat my name.*

[Exit.

SCENE changes to a Tavern: Freeman and Tradelove over a bottle.

Trade. Come, Mr. Freeman, here's Mynheer Jan Van Tim, Tam, Tam—I shall never think of that Dutchman's name—

Free. Mynheer Jan Van Timtamtirelireletta Heer Van Fainwell.

Trade. Ay, Heer Van Fainwell: I never heard such a confounded name in my life—here's his health, I say.

Free. With all my heart.

Trade. Faith I never expected to have found so generous a thing in a Dutchman.

Free. Oh, he has nothing of the Hollander in his temper—except an antipathy to monarchy.—As soon as I told him your circumstances, he reply'd, he would not be the ruin of any man for the world—and immediately made this proposal himself.—Let him take what time he will for the payment, said he; or if he'll give me his word, I'll forgive him the debt.

Trade. Well, Mr. Freeman, I can but thank you.—'Egad you have made a man of me again! and if ever I lay a wager more, may I rot in a gaol.

Free. I assure you, Mr. Tradelove, I was very much concern'd, because I was the occasion—the very innocently, I protest.

Trade. I dare swear you was, Mr. Freeman.

Enter Fidler.

Fid. Please to have ^{us} lesson of music, or a song, gentlemen?

Free. Song! ay, with all our hearts: have you a very merry one?

Fid. Yes, Sir, my wife and I can give you a merry dialogue. *[Here is the song.]*

Trade. 'Tis very pretty, faith!

Free. There's something for you to drink, friend: go; lose no time.

Fid. I thank you, Sir. *[Exit.]*

Enter Colonel, dressed for the Dutch merchant.

Col. Ha, Mynheer Tradelove, 'Ik been sorry voor your troubles—maer 'Ik sal you easie maken, 'Ik will de gelt nie hebben——

Trade. I shall for ever acknowledge the obligation, Sir.

Free. But you understand upon what condition, Mr. Tradelove; Miss Lovely.

Col. Ya, de frow sal al te regt setten, Mynheer.

Trade. With all my heart, Mynheer: you shall have my consent to marry her freely——

Free. Well, then, as I am a party concern'd between you, Mynheer Jan Van Timtamtirelire-letta Heer Van Fainwell shall give you a discharge of your wager under his own hand,——and you shall give him your consent to marry Miss Lovely under yours,——that is the way to avoid all manner of disputes hereafter.

Col. Ya, Weeragtig.

Trade. Ay, ay, so it is, Mr. Freeman: I'll give it under mine this minute. *[Sits down to write.]*

Col. And so 'Ik sal. *[Does the same.]*

Free. So ho, the house, *[Enter drawer.]* Bid your master come up——I'll see there be witnesses enough to the bargain. *[Aside.]*

Enter Sackbut.

Sack. Do you call, gentlemen?

Free. Ay, Mr. Sackbut, we shall want your hand here——

Trade.

Trade. There, Mynheer, there's my consent as amply as you can desire; but you must insert your own name, for I know not how to spell it: I have left a blank for it. [*Gives the Colonel a Paper.*]

Col. Ya Ik sal dat well doen——

Free. Now, Mr. Sackbut, you and I will witness it. [*They write.*]

Col. Daer, Mynheer Tradelove, is your discharge. [*Gives him a paper.*]

Trade. Be pleased to witness this receipt too, gentlemen. [*Freemen and Sackbut put their hands.*]

Free. Ay, ay, that we will.

Col. Well, Mynheer, ye most meer doen, ye most Myn voorsprach to de Frow Syn.

Free. He means, you must recommend him to the lady.——

Trade. That I will, and to the rest of my brother guardians.

Col. Wat voor, de duyvel heb you meer guardians.

Trade. Only three, Mynheer.

Col. What donder heb ye Myn betrocken Mynheer?—— Had Ik dat gewoeten, Ik soude eaven met you geweest Syn.

Sack. But Mr. Tradelove is the principal, and he can do a great deal with the rest, Sir.

Free. And he shall use his interest, I promise you, Mynheer.

Trad. I will say all that ever I can think on to recommend you, Mynheer; and if you please, I'll introduce you to the lady.

Col. Well, dat is waer—Maer ye must first sprekken of Myn to de Frow, and to oudere Gentlemen.

Free. Ay, that's the best way—and then I and the Heer Van Fainwell will meet you there.

Trade. I will go this moment, upon honour—— Your most obedient humble servant.—— My speaking will do you little good, Mynheer: ha, ha! we have bit you, faith: ha, ha!

Well—my debt's discharged, and as for Nan, He has my consent—to get her, if he can. [*Exit.*]

Col. Ha, ha, ha! this was a master-piece of contrivance, Freeman.

Free. He hugs himself with his supposed good fortune, and little thinks the luck's on our side!—But come, pursue the fickle Goddess while she's in the mood—Now for the quaker.

Col. That's the hardest task.

*Of all the counterfeits perform'd by man,
A soldier makes the simplest Puritan.* [Exeunt.

ACT V. SCENE *Prim's House.*

Enter Mrs. Prim and Miss Lovely, in Quakers' Dresses, meeting.

Mrs. Pr. SO, now I like thee, Anne: art thou not better without thy monstrous hoop-coat and patches?—If Heaven should make thee so many black spots upon thy face, wou'd it not fright thee, Anne?

Miss Lov. If it should turn your inside outward, and show all the spots of your hypocrisy, 'twou'd fright me worse!

Mrs. Pr. My hypocrisy! I scorn thy words, Anne: I lay no baits.

Miss Lov. If you did, you'd catch no fish.

Mrs. Pr. Well, well, make thy jests—but I'd have thee to know, Anne, that I could have catch'd as many fish (as thou call'st them) in my time, as ever thou did'st with all thy fool-traps about thee—If admirers be thy aim, thou wilt have more of them in this dress than the other—The men, take my word for't, are most desirous to see what we are most careful to conceal.

Miss Lov. Is that the reason of your formality, Mrs. Prim? Truth will out: I ever thought, indeed, there was more design than godliness in the pinch'd cap.

Mrs. Pr. Go, thou art corrupted with reading lewd plays, and filthy romances—good for nothing but

but to lead youth into the high road of fornication.
— Ah ! I wish thou art not already too familiar
with the wicked ones.

Miss Lov. Too familiar with the wicked ones !
Pray no more of those freedoms, Madam. — I am
familiar with none so wicked as yourself — How
dare you thus talk to me ! you, you, you, un-
worthy woman you. [*Bursts into tears.*]

Enter Tradelove.

Trade. What in tears, Nancy ? What have you
done to her, Mrs. Prim, to make her weep ?

Miss Lov. Done to me ! I admire I keep my
senses among you ; — but I will rid myself of your
tyranny, if there be either law or justice to be had :
— I'll force you to give me up my liberty.

Mrs. Prim. Thou hast more need to weep for
thy sins, Anne — Yea, for thy manifold sins.

Miss Lov. Don't think that I'll be still the fool
which you have made me. — No, I'll wear what I
please — go when and where I please — and keep
what company I think fit, and not what you shall
direct — I will.

Trade. For my part, I do think all this very rea-
sonable, Miss Lovely — 'tis fit you should have your
liberty, and for that very purpose I am come.

*Enter Mr. Periwinkle and Obadiah Prim, with
a letter in his hand.*

Per. I have bought some black stockings of your
husband, Mrs. Prim, but he tells me the glover's
trade belongs to you ; therefore I pray you look me
out five or six dozen of mourning gloves, such as
are given at funerals, and send them to my house.

Ob. Pr. My friend Periwinkle has got a good
wind-fall to-day — seven hundred a year.

Mrs. Pr. I wish thee joy of it, neighbour.

Trade. What, is Sir Toby dead then ?

Per. He is ! You'll take care, Mrs. Prim.

Mrs. Pr. Yea, I will, neighbour.

Ob. Pr. This letter recommendeth a speaker ; 'tis
from Aminadab Holdfast of Bristol : peradventure

he will be here this night; therefore, Sarah, do thou take care for his reception—

[Gives her the letter.]

Mrs. Pr. I will obey thee. [Exit.]

Ob. Pr. What art thou in the dumps for, Anne?

Trade. We must marry her, Mr. Prim.

Ob. Pr. Why truly, if we could find a husband worth having, I should be as glad to see her married as thou would'st, neighbour.

Per. Well said, there are but few worth having.

Trade. I can recommend you a man now, that I think you can none of you have an objection to!

Enter Sir Philip Modelove.

Per. You recommend? Nay, whenever she marries, I'll recommend the husband—

Sir Phil. What must it be, a whale or a rhinoceros, Mr. Periwinkle? ha, ha, ha!—Mr. Tradelove, I have a bill upon you, [Gives him a paper] and have been seeking for you all over the town.

Trade. I'll accept it, Sir Philip, and pay it when due.

Per. He shall be none of the sops at your end of the town, with full perukes and empty skulls, nor yet any of your trading gentry, who puzzle the heralds to find arms for their coaches.—No, he shall be a man famous for travels, solidity, and curiosity—one who has searched into the profundity of nature! When Heaven shall direct such a one, he shall have my consent, because it may turn to the benefit of mankind.

Miss. Lov. The benefit of mankind! What, would you anatomize me?

Sir Phil. Ay, ay, Madam, he would dissect you.

Trade. Or, pore over you through a microscope, to see how your blood circulates from the crown of your head to the sole of your foot—ha, ha! but I have a husband for you, a man that knows how to improve your fortune; one that trades to the four corners of the globe.

Miss

Miss Low. And would send me for a venture perhaps.

Trade. One that will dress you in all the pride of Europe, Asia, Africa, and America—a Dutch merchant, my girl.

Sir Phil. A Dutchman! ha, ha! there's a husband for a fine lady.—Ya Frow, will you meet myn Slapen—ha, ha! he'll learn you to talk the language of the hogs, Madam, ha, ha!

Trade. He'll learn you that one merchant is of more service to a nation than fifty coxcombs.—The Dutch know the trading interest to be of more benefit to the state, than the landed.

Sir Phil. but what is either interest to a lady?

Trade. 'Tis the merchant makes the *belle*.—How would the ladies sparkle in the box without the merchant? The Italian diamond! The French brocade! The Italian fan! The Flanders lace! The fine Dutch holland! How would they vent their scandal over their tea-tables? And where would your beaux have Champagne to toast their mistresses, were it not for the merchant.

Ob. Pr. Verily, neighbour Tradelove, thou dost waste thy breath about nothing—All that thou hast said tendeth only to debauch youth, and fill their heads with the pride and luxury of this world.—The merchant is a very great friend to Satan, and sendeth as many to his dominions as the Pope.

Per. Right, I say knowledge makes the man.

Ob. Pr. Yea, but not thy kind of knowledge—it is the knowledge of truth. — Search thou for the light within, and not for baubles, friend.

Miss Low. Ah, study your country's good, Mr. Periwinkle, and not her insects.—Rid you of your home-bred monsters, before you fetch any from abroad.—I dare swear you have maggots enough in your own brain to stock all the Virtuoso's in Europe with butterflies.

Sir Phil. By my soul, Miss Nancy's a wit.

Ob. Pr. That is more than she can say by thee, friend!

friend.—Look ye, it is in vain to talk, when I meet a man worthy of her, she shall have my leave to marry him.

Miss Lov. Provided he be of the faithful.—

Was there ever such a swarm of caterpillars to blast the hopes of a woman! [*Aside.*] Know this, that you contend in vain: I'll have no husband of your chusing, nor shall you lord it over me long.—I'll try the power of an English senate—Orphans have been redress'd, and wills set aside—and none did ever deserve their pity more.—Oh Fainwell! where are thy promises to free me from these vermin? 'Alas! the task was more difficult than he imagin'd!

A harder task than what the poets tell

Of yore, the fair Andromeda beset;

She but one monster fear'd, I've four to fear,

And see no Perseus, no deliverer near. [*Exit.*

Enter Servant, and whispers to Prim.

Per. The woman is mad. [*Exit.*

Sir Phil. So you are all, in my opinion. [*Exit.*

Serv. One Simon Pure enquireth for thee.

Ob. Pr. Friend Tradelove, business requireth my presence.

Trade. Oh, I shan't trouble you.—Pox take him for an unmannerly dog—However, I have kept my word with my Dutchman, and will introduce him too for all you. [*Exit.*

Enter Colonel in a Quaker's habit.

Ob. Pr. Friend Pure, thou art welcome: how is it with friend Holdfast, and all friends in Bristol? Timothy Littleworth, John Slenderbrain, and Christopher Keepfaith?

Col. A goodly company! [*Aside.*] They are all in health, I thank thee for them.

Ob. Pr. Friend Holdfast writes me word, that thou camest lately from Pensylvania: how do all friends there?

Col. What the devil shall I say? I know just as much of Pensylvania as I do of Bristol. [*Aside.*

Ob. Pr.

Ob. Pr. Do they thrive?

Col. Yea, friend, the blessing of their good works fall upon them.

Enter Mrs. Prim and Miss Lovely.

Ob. Pr. Sarah, know our friend Pure.

Mrs. Pr. Thou art welcome. [*He salutes her.*]

Col. Here comes the sum of all my wishes.—
How charming she appears even in that disguise!

[*Aside.*]

Ob. Pr. Why dost thou consider the maiden so attentively, friend?

Col. I will tell thee: About four days ago I saw a vision—This very maiden, but in vain attire, standing on a precipice, and heard a voice, which called me by my name—and bid me put forth my hand and save her from the pit.—I did so, and methought the damsel grew unto my side.

Mrs. Pr. What can that portend?

Ob. Pr. The damsel's conversion—I am persuaded.

Miss Lov. That's false, I'm sure—— [*Aside.*]

Ob. Pr. Wilt thou use the means, friend Pure?

Col. Means! What means? Is she not thy daughter, already one of the faithful?

Mrs. Pr. No, alas! she's one of the ungodly.

Ob. Pr. Pray thee mind what this good man will say unto thee: he will teach thee the way that thou shouldest walk, Anne.

Miss Lov. I know my way without his instruction: I hop'd to have been quiet when once I had put on your odious formality here.

Col. Then thou wearest it out of compulsion, not choice, friend?

Miss Lov. Thou art in the right of it, friend.—

Mrs. Pr. Art thou not ashamed to mimick the good man? Ah! thou art a stubborn girl.

Col. Mind her not; she hurteth not me—If thou wilt leave her alone with me, I will discuss some few points with her, that may perchance

soften her stubbornness, and melt her into compliance.

Ob. Pr. Content: I pray thee *put it home to her.*
—Come, Sarah, let us leave the good man with her.

Miss Lov. [*Catching hold of Prim, he breaks loose, and exit.*] What do you mean—to leave me with this old enthusiastical cantor? Don't think, because I comply'd with your formality, to impose your ridiculous doctrine upon me.

Col. I pray thee, young woman, moderate thy passion.

Miss Lov. I pray thee walk after thy leader, you will but lose your labour upon me.—These wretches will certainly make me mad!

Col. I am of another opinion! the spirit telleth me I shall convert thee, Anne.

Miss Lov. 'Tis a lying spirit, don't believe it.

Col. Say'st thou so? Why then thou shalt convert me, my angel. [*Catching her in his arms.*

Miss Lov. [*Shrieks.*] Ah! monster, hold off, or I'll tear thy eyes out.

Col. Hush! for Heaven's sake—dost thou not know me? I am Fainwell.

Miss Lov. Fainwell! [*Enter old Prim.*] Oh I'm undone! Prim here—I wish with all my soul I had been dumb.

Ob. Pr. What is the matter? Why didst thou shriek out, Anne?

Miss Lov. Shriek out! I'll shriek and shriek again, cry murder, thieves, or any thing, to drown the noise of that eternal babbler, if you leave me with him any longer.

Ob. Pr. Was that all? Fie, fie, Anne.

Col. No matter, I'll bring down her stomach I'll warrant thee—Leave us, I pray thee.

Ob. Pr. Fare thee well. Verily I was afraid the flesh had got the better of the spirit. [*Exit.*

Col. My charming lovely woman! [*Embraces her.*
Miss

Miss Lov. What mean'st thou by this disguise, Fainwell?

Col. To set thee free, if thou wilt perform thy promise.

Miss Lov. Make me mistress of my fortune, and make thy own conditions.

Col. This night shall answer all my wishes — See here, I have the consent of three of thy guardians already, and doubt not but Prim will make the fourth. *[Prim listening.]*

Ob. Pr. I would gladly hear what arguments the good man useth to bend her. *[Aside.]*

Miss Lov. Thy words give me new life, methinks.

Ob. Pr. What do I hear?

Miss Lov. Thou best of men, Heaven meant to bless me sure, when I first saw thee.

Ob. Pr. He hath mollified her. — O wonderful conversion!

Col. Ha! Prim listening. — No more, my love, we are observed: seem to be edified, and give 'em hopes that thou wilt turn Quaker, and leave the rest to me. *[Aloud.]* I am glad to find that thou art touch'd with what I said unto thee, Anne; another time I will explain the other article unto thee: in the mean while, be thou dutiful to our friend Prim.

Miss Lov. I shall obey thee in every thing.

Enter Obadiah Prim.

Ob. Pr. Oh what a prodigious change is here! Thou hast wrought a miracle, friend! Anne, how dost thou like the doctrine he hath preached?

Miss Lov. So well, that I could talk to him for ever, methinks — I am ashamed of my former folly, and ask your pardon, 'Mr. Prim.'

Col. Enough, enough, that thou art sorry: he is no Pope, Anne.

Ob. Pr. Verily, thou dost rejoice me exceedingly, Friend: will it please thee to walk into the next room, and refresh thyself? — Come, take the maiden by the hand.

Col.

Col. We will follow thee.

Enter Servant.

Serv. There is another Simon Pure enquireth for thee, Master.

Col. The Devil there is. *[Aside.]*

Ob. Pr. Another Simon Pure! I do not know him, is he any relation of thine?

Col. No friend, I know him not—Pox take him: I wish he were in Pensilvania again, with all my soul. *[Aside.]*

Miss Lov. What shall I do? *[Aside.]*

Ob. Pr. Bring him up.

Col. Humph! then one of us must go down, that's certain—Now impudence assist me.

Enter Simon Pure.

Ob. Pr. What is thy will with me, friend?

S. Pu. Didst thou not receive a letter from Aminadab Holdfast of Bristol, concerning one Simon Pure?

Ob. Pr. Yea, and Simon Pure is already here, friend.

Col. And Simon Pure will stay here, friend, if it be possible. *[Aside.]*

S. Pu. That's an untruth, for I am he.

Col. Take thou heed, friend, what thou dost say: I do affirm that I am Simon Pure.

S. P. Thy name may be Pure, friend, but not that Pure.

Col. Yea that Pure, which my good friend, Aminadab Holdfast, wrote to my friend Prim about: the same Simon Pure that came from Pensilvania, and sojourned in Bristol eleven days: thou would'st not take my name from me, would'st thou?—till I have done with it. *[Aside.]*

S. Pu. Thy name! I am astonish'd!

Col. At what? at thy own assurance?

[Going up to him, S. Pure starts back.]

S. P. Avaunt, Satan, approach me not: I defy thee and all thy works.

Miss Lov. Oh, he'll outcant him—Undone, undone for ever. *[Aside.]*

Col.

Col. Hark thee, friend, thy sham will not take—Don't exert thy voice, thou art too well acquainted with Satan to start at him, thou wicked reprobate—What can thy design be here?

Enter a servant and gives Prim a letter.

Ob. Pr. One of these must be a counterfeit, but which I cannot say.

Col. What can that letter be? [*Aside.*

S. Pu. Thou must be the Devil, friend, that's certain; for no human power can stock so great a falsehood.

Ob. Pr. This letter sayeth that thou art better acquainted with that prince of darkness, than any here—Read that, I pray thee, Simon.

[*Gives it the Col.*

Col. 'Tis Freeman's hand—[*Reads*] *There is a design formed to rob your house this night, and cut your throat; and for that purpose there is a man disguised like a quaker, who is to pass for one Simon Pure: the gang, whereof I am one, though now resolved to rob no more, has been at Bristol: one of them came in the Coach with the quaker, whose name he hath taken; and from what he hath gathered from him, formed that design, and did not doubt but he should impose so far upon you, as to make you turn out the real Simon Pure, and keep him with you. Make the right use of this.* Adieu.—Excellent well!

[*Aside.*

Ob. Pr. Dost thou hear this? [*To S. Pu.*

S. Pu. Yea, but it moveth me not; that doubtless is the impostor. [*Pointing at the Col.*

Col. Ah! thou wicked one—now I consider thy face, I remember thou didst come up in the leathern conveniency with me—thou hadst a black bob wig on, and a brown camblet coat with brass buttons—Can'st thou deny it, ha?

S. Pu. Yea, I can, and with a safe conscience too, Friend.

Ob. Pr. Verily, friend, thou art the most impudent villain I ever saw.

Miss Lov. Nay, then I'll have a fling at him.

[*Aside.*

[*Aside.*] I remember the face of this fellow at Bath—Ay this is he that pick'd my lady Raffle's pocket in the grove—Don't you remember that the mob pump'd you, friend?—This is the most notorious rogue—

S. Pu. What does provoke thee to seek my life? Thou wilt not hang me, wilt thou, wrongfully?

Ob. Pr. She will do thee no hurt, nor thou shalt do me none; therefore get thee about thy business, friend, and leave thy wicked course of life, or thou may'st not come off so favourably every where. Simon, I pray thee put him forth.

Col. Go, friend, I would advise thee, and tempt thy fate no more.

S. Pu. Yes, I will go, but it shall be to thy confusion; for I shall clear myself: I will return with some proofs that shall convince thee, Obadiah, that thou art highly imposed on. [*Exit.*]

Col. Then there will be no staying for me, that's certain—What the Devil shall I do? [*Aside.*]

Ob. Pr. What monstrous works of iniquity are there in this world, Simon!

Col. Yea, the age is full of vice—S'death, I am so confounded, I know not what to say. [*Aside.*]

Ob. Pr. Thou art disorder'd, friend—art thou not well?

Col. My Spirit is greatly troubled, and something telleth me, that tho' I have wrought a good work in converting this maiden, this tender maiden, yet my labour will be in vain: for the evil spirit fighteth against her; and I see, yea I see with the eye of my inward man, that Satan will re-buffet her again, whenever I withdraw myself from her; and she will, yea, this very damsel will, return again to that abomination from whence I have retriev'd her, as if it were, yea, as if it were out, of the jaws of the fiend.

Ob. Pr. Good lack, thinkest thou so?

Miss Lov. I must second him. [*Aside.*] What meaneth

meaneth this struggling within me: I feel the spirit resisteth the vanities of this world, but the flesh is rebellious, yea the flesh—I greatly fear the flesh and the weakness thereof—hum—

Ob. Pr. The maid is inspir'd. *[Aside.]*

Col. Behold, her light begins to shine forth.—

Excellent woman.

Miss Lev. This good man hath spoken comfort unto me, yea comfort, I say; because the words which he hath breathed into my outward ears are gone through and fix'd in my heart, yea verily in mine heart, I say;—and I feel the Spirit doth love him exceedingly, hum—

Col. She acts it to the life. *[Aside.]*

Ob. Pr. Prodigious! The Damsel is filled with the Spirit,—Sarah.

Enter Mrs. Prim.

Mrs. Pr. I am greatly rejoiced to see such a change in our beloved Anne. I came to tell thee that supper stayeth for thee.

Col. I am not disposed for thy food, my spirit longeth for more delicious meat!—I would I redeem this maiden from the tribe of sinners, and break those cords asunder wherewith she is bound, —hum—

Miss Lev. Something whispers in my ears, methinks—that I must be subject to the will of this good man, and from him only must hope for consolation. —hum— It also telleth me, that I am a chosen vessel to raise up seed to the faithful, and that thou must consent that we two be one flesh according to the word—hum—

Ob. Pr. What a revelation is here! This is certainly part of thy vision, friend: this is the maiden's growing unto thy side; ah! with what willingness should I give thee my consent, could I give thee her fortune too,—but thou wilt never get the consent of the wicked ones.

Col. I wish I was sure of your's. *[Aside.]*

Ob. Pr. My soul rejoiceth; yea rejoiceth, I say, to

to find the Spirit within thee; for lo, it moveth thee with natural agitation—yea, with natural agitation, towards this good man—yea, it stirreth, as one may say—yea, verily I say, it stirreth up thy inclination—yea, as one would stir a pudding. All—hum!

Miss Lov. I see, I see! the spirit guiding of thy hand, good Obadiah Prim, and now behold thou art signing thy consent;—and now I see myself within thy arms, my friend and brother, yea, I am become bone of thy bone, and flesh of thy flesh. [*Embracing him.*] Hum——

Col. Admirably perform'd. [*Aside.*]—And I will take thee in all spiritual love for an helpmate, yea, for the wife of my bosom—and now methinks—I feel a longing—yea, a longing, I say, for the consummation of thy love——yea, I do long exceedingly.

Miss Lov. And verily, verily, my spirit feeleth the same longing. All. Hum!

Mrs. Pr. The Spirit hath greatly moved them both—friend Prim, thou must consent; there's no resisting of the Spirit!

Ob. Pr. Yea, the light within sheweth me, that I shall fight a good fight—and wrestle thro' those reprobate fiends, thy other guardians;—yea, I perceive the Spirit will hedge thee into the flock of the righteous.—Thou art a chosen lamb—yea a chosen lamb, and I will not push thee back—No, I will not, I say;—no, thou shalt leap-a, and frisk-a, and skip-a, and bound, and bound, I say, —yea, bound within the fold of the righteous, —yea, even within thy fold, my brother.—Fetch me the pen and ink, Sarah—and my hand shall confess its obedience to the spirit.

Col. I wish it were over.

Ester Mrs. Prim *with Pen and Ink*

Miss Lov. I tremble lest this quaking rogue should return and spoil all. [*Aside.*]

Ob. Pr. Here, friend, do thou write what the Spirit prompteth,

prompteth, and I will sign it. [Col. *sits down.*

Mrs. Pr. Verily, Anne, it greatly rejoiceth me, to see thee reformed from that original wickedness wherein I found thee.

Miss Lov. I do believe thou art, and I thank thee—

Col. [Reads.] *This is to certify all whom it may concern, that I do freely give all my right and title, in Anne Lovely, to Simon Pure, and my full consent that she shall become his wife, according to the form of marriage. Witness my hand.*

Ob. Pr. That's enough, give me the pen.

[Signs it.]

Enter Betty, running to Miss Lovely.

Betty. Oh! Madam, Madam, here's the quaking man again: he has brought a coachman and two or three more.

Miss Lov. Ruin'd past redemption!

[*Aside to the Col.*

Col. No, no, one minute sooner had spoil'd all; but now—here's company coming, friend, give me the paper. [*Going up to Prim hastily.*

Ob. Pr. Here it is, Simon; and I wish thee happy with the maiden.

Miss Lov. 'Tis done, and now Devil do thy worst.

Enter Simon Pure, and Coachman, &c.

S. Pu. Look thee, friend, I have brought these people to satisfy thee that I am not that impostor which thou did'st take me for: this is the man that did drive the leather conveyency, and brought me from Bristol,—and this is—

Col. Look ye, friend, to save the court the trouble of examining witnesses—I plead guilty—ha, ha!

Ob. Pr. How's this? Is not thy name Pure, then?

Col. No, really, Sir, I only make bold with this gentleman's name—but I here give it up safe and sound: it has done the business which I had occasion for, and now I intend to wear my own, which shall be at his service upon the same occasion at any time.—Ha, ha, ha!

S. Pu.

S. Pa. Oh! the wickedness of the age!

Coachman. Then you have no further need of us. *[Exit Coachman, &c.]*

Col. No, honest man; you may go about your business.

Ob. Pr. I am struck dumb with thy impudence, Anne; thou hast deceiv'd me—and perchance undone thyself.

Mrs. Pr. Thou art a dissembling baggage, and shame will overtake thee. *[Exit.]*

S. Pa. I am grieved to see thy wife so much troubled; I will follow and console her. *[Exit.]*

Enter Servant.

Per. Thy brother guardians enquire for thee: here is another man with them.

Miss Lov. Who can that other man be?

Col. 'Tis one Freeman, a friend of mine, whom I ordered to bring the rest of the guardians here. *[To the Colonel.]*

Enter Sir Philip, Tradelove, Periwinkle, and Freeman.

Free. *[To the Colonel.]* Is all safe? did my letter do you service?

Col. All, all's safe! ample service. *[Aside.]*

Sir Phil. Miss Nancy, how do'st do, child?

Miss Lov. Don't call me Miss, friend Philip, my name is Anne, thou knowest.

Sir Phil. What, is the girl metamorphos'd?

Miss Lov. I wish thou wert so metamorphos'd. Ah! Philip, throw off that gaudy attire, and wear the cloaths becoming thy age.

Ob. Pr. I am ashamed to see these men. *[Aside.]*

Sir Phil. My age! the woman is possess'd.

Col. No, thou art possess'd rather, friend.

Trade. Hark ye, Miss Lovely, one word with you. *[Takes hold of her hand.]*

Col. This maiden is my wife, thanks to friend Prim, and thou hast no business with her. *[Takes her from him.]*

Trade. His wife! hark ye, Mr. Freeman.

Per.

Per. Why, you have made a very fine piece of work of it, Mr. Prim.

Sir Phil. Married to a Quaker! thou art a fine fellow to be left guardian to an orphan, truly—there's a husband for a young lady!

Col. When I have put on my beau cloaths, Sir Philip, you'll like me better—

Sir Phil. Thou wilt make a very scurvy beau—friend—

Col. I believe I can prove it under your hand that you thought me a very fine gentleman in the Park t'other day, about thirty-six minutes after eleven: will you take a pinch, Sir Philip—One of the finest snuff-boxes you ever saw. [*Offers him snuff.*]

Sir Phil. Ha, ha, ha! I am overjoyed, faith I am, if thou be'st the gentleman—I own I did give my consent to the gentleman I brought here to-day;—but whether this is he, I can't be positive.

Ob. Prim. Can'st thou not?—Now I think thou art a fine fellow to be left guardian to an orphan.—Thou shallow-brain'd shuttlecock, he may be a pick-pocket for ought thou do'st know.

Per. You would have been two rare fellows to have been entrusted with the sole management of her fortune, would ye not, think ye? But Mr. Tradelove and myself shall take care of her position.

Trade. Ay, ay, so we will—Didn't you tell me the Dutch merchant desired me to meet him here, Mr. Freeman?

Free. I did so, and I am sure he will be here, if you'll have a little patience.

Col. What, is Mr. Tradelove impatient? Nay, then, ib ben gereet voor you, heb be, *Jan Van Tim-tamtirelireletta Heer Van Faintwell*, vergeeten!

Trade. Oh! pox of the name! what have you trick'd me too, Mr. Freeman?

Col. Trick'd, Mr. Tradelove! did not I give you two thousand pounds for your consent fairly? And now do you tell a gentleman he has trick'd you?

Per.

Per. So, so, you are a pretty guardian, faith, to sell your charge: what, did you look upon her as part of your stock?

Ob. Pr. Ha, ha, ha! I am glad thy knavery is found out, however—I confess the maiden over-reached me, and I had no finister end at all.

Per. Ay, ay, one thing or other over-reached you all—but I'll take care he shall never finger a penny of her money, I warrant you;—over-reach'd quoth'a! Why I might have been over-reach'd too, if I had had no more wit: I don't know—but this very fellow may be him that was directed to me from Grand Cairo t'other day. Ha, ha, ha!

Col. The very same.

Per. Are you so, Sir? but your trick would not pass upon me.—

Col. No, as you say, at that time it did not, that was not my lucky hour:—but hark ye, Sir, I must let you into one secret—you may keep honest John Tradescant's coat on, for your uncle Sir Toby Periwinkle is not dead—so the charge of mourning will be saved, ha, ha, ha!—Don't you remember Mr. Pillage, your uncle's steward? Ha, ha, ha!

Per. Not dead! I begin to fear I am trick'd too.

Col. Don't you remember the signing of a lease, Mr. Periwinkle?

Per. Well, and what signifies that lease, if my uncle is not dead?—Ha! I am sure it was a lease I signed.—

Col. Aye, but it was a lease for life, Sir, and of this beautiful tenement, I thank you.

[*Taking hold of Miss Lovely.*]

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha! Neighbours fare.

Free. So then, I find you are all trick'd, ha, ha!

Per. I am certain I read as plain a lease as ever I read in my life.

Col. You read a lease I grant you; but you sign'd this contract. [Showing a paper.]

Per. How durst you put this trick upon me, Mr. Freeman? Didn't you tell me my uncle was dying?

Free.

Free. And would tell you twice as much to serve my friend, ha, ha!

Sir Phil. What the learned and famous Mr. Periwinkle chous'd too!—Ha, ha, ha!—I shall die with laughing, ha, ha, ha!

Ob. Pr. It had been well if her father had left her to wiser heads than *thine* and *mine*, friends, ha, ha, ha!

Trade. Well, since you have outwitted us all, pray you what and who are you, Sir?

Sir Phil. Sir, the gentleman is a fine gentleman—I am glad you have got a person, Madam, who understands dress and good breeding.—I was resolved she should have a husband of my chusing.

Ob. Pr. I am sorry the maiden is fallen into such hands.

Trade. A beau! nay then she is finely help'd up.

Miss Lew. Why beans are great encouragers of trade, Sir, ha, ha, ha!

Col. Look ye, gentlemen—I am the person who can give the best account of myself, and I must beg Sir Philip's pardon, when I tell him, that I have as much aversion to what he calls dress and breeding, as I have to the enemies of my religion. I have had the honour to serve his Majesty, and headed a regiment of the bravest fellows that ever push'd bayonet in the throat of a Frenchman; and notwithstanding the fortune this lady brings me, whenever my country wants my aid, this sword and arm are at her service.

And now, my fair, if thou'lt but deign to smile,

I meet a recompence for all my toil:

Love and religion ne'er admit restraint,

And force makes many sinners, not one saint;

Still, free as air the active mind does rove,

And searches proper objects for its love;

But that once fix'd, 'tis past the power of art

To chase the dear idea from the heart:

'Tis liberty of choice that sweetens life,

Makes the glad husband and the happy wife.

EPITLOGUE,

Written by Mr. SEWEL:

Spoken by Mrs. BULLOCK.

WHAT new strange ways our modern beaux devise!

What trials of love-skill, to gain the prize!

The Heathen Gods, who never matter'd rapes,

Scarce wore such strange variety of shapes:

The Devil take their odious barren skulls,

To court in form of snakes and filthy bulls:

Old Jove once nick'd it too, as I am told,

In a whole lapful of true standard gold;

How must his godship then fair Danae warm!

In trucking ware for ware there is no harm.

Well after all that, money has a charm.

But now, indeed, that stale invention's past!

Besides you know that guineas fall so fast,

Poor nymph must come to pocket-piece at last.

Old Harry's face, or good Queen Bess's ruff,

Not that I'd take 'em—may do well enough;

No—my ambitious spirit's far above

Those little tricks of mercenary love.

That man be mine, who like the Col'nel here,

Can top his character in ev'ry sphere;

Who can a thousand ways employ his wit,

Out-promise statesmen, and out-cheat a cit:

Beyond the colours of a trav'ler paint,

And cant, and ogle too—beyond a saint.

The last disguise most pleas'd me, I confess,

There's something tempting in the preaching dress;

And pleas'd me more than once a dame of note,

Who lov'd her husband in his footman's coat.

To see one eye in wanton motions play'd,

The other to the heav'nly regions stray'd,

As if, it for it's fellow's frailties pray'd:

But yet I hope, for all that I have said,

To find my spouse a man of war in bed.





There is my friend. Please to give
Mr. Jackson, in the Chamber of Deputies.

Act III.

CONSCIOUS LOVERS.

Scene 4.



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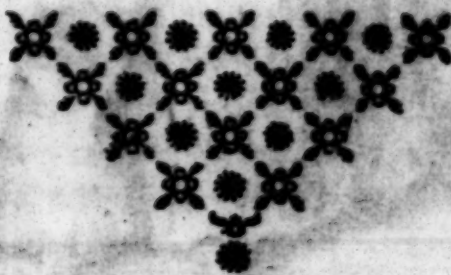
250 22

*M^{rs} ABINGTON in the Character of PHILLIS.
O here is my Young Mistress. Go ye Liquorish Fool*

THE
CONSCIOUS LOVERS,
A
COMEDY,
WRITTEN BY
SIR RICHARD STEELE.

Marked with the Variations of the
MANAGER'S BOOKS,
AT THE
Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane.

ILLUD GENUS NARRATIONIS, QUOD IN PERSONIS POSITUM
EST, DEBET HABERE SERMONIS FESTIVITATEM, ANIMO-
RUM DISSIMILITUDINEM, GRAVITATEM, LENITATEM,
SPEM, METUM, SUSPICIONEM, DESIDERIUM, DISSIMULA-
TIONEM, MISERICORDIAM, RERUM VARIETATES, FOR-
TUNE COMMUTATIONEM, INSUPERATUM INCOMMODUM,
SUBITAM LÆTITIAM, JUCUNDUM, EXITUM, RERUM.
Cic. Rhetor. ad Herenn. Lib. I.



L O N D O N:
PRINTED FOR W. STRAHAN, W. OWEN,
T. CASLON, T. LOWNDES, W. NICOLL,
AND S. BLADON.

M.DCC.LXXVI.



 The Reader is desired to observe, that the Passages omitted in the Representation at the Theatres are here preserved, and marked with inverted Commas; as in Line 6 to 29 in Page 5.

PROLOGUE,

By Mr. WELSTED.

*TO win your hearts, and to secure your praise,
The comic-writers strive by various ways:
By subtil stratagems they act their game,
And leave untry'd no avenue to fame.
One writes the spouse a beating from his wife;
And says, each stroke was copy'd from the life.
Some fix all wit and humour in grimace,
And make a livelibeood of Pinkey's face:
Here, one gay shew and costly habits tries,
Confiding to the judgment of your eyes:
Another smuts his scene (a cunning shaver)
Sure of the rakes and of the wenches favour.
Oft' have these arts prevail'd; and one may guess,
If practis'd o'er again, would find success.
But the bold sage, the poet of to-night,
By new and desp'rate rules resolv'd to write;
Fain would he give more just applauses rise,
And please by wit that scorns the aids of vice:
The praise he seeks, from worthier motives springs,
Such praise, as praise, to those that give it, brings.
Your aid, most humbly sought, then, Britons, lend,
And lib'ral mirth, like lib'ral men, defend:
No more let ribaldry, with licence writ,
Usurp the name of eloquence or wit;
No more let lawless farce uncensur'd go,
The lewd dull gleanings of a Smithfield show.
'Tis yours, with breeding to refine the age,
To chasten wit, and moralize the stage.
Ye modest, wise and good, ye fair, ye brave,
To-night the champion of your virtues save,
Redeem from long contempt the comic name,
And judge politely for your Country's fame.*

Dramatis Personæ, 1776.

M E N.

Sir John Bevil	—	At Drury Lane.	Covent Garden.
Mr. Sealand	—	Mr. BRANSBY.	Mr. FEARON.
Bevil jun. in love with Indiana.	—	Mr. AICKIN.	Mr. CLARKE.
Myrtle, in love with Lucinda	—	Mr. REDDISH.	Mr. LEWIS.
Cimberton, a Coxcomb	—	Mr. JEFFERSON.	Mr. WROUGHTON.
Humphrey, an old servant to Sir John	—	Mr. PARSONS.	Mr. QUICK.
Tóm, servant to Bevil jun.	—	Mr. USHER.	Mr. THOMPSON.
Daniel, a country boy, servant to Indiana	—	Mr. KING.	Mr. WOODWARD.
		Mr. BURTON.	Mr. WEWITZER.

W O M E N.

Mrs. Sealand, second wife to Sealand	—	Mrs. CROSS.	Mrs. PITT.
Isabella, sister to Sealand	—	Mrs. JOHNSON.	Mrs. BOOTH.
Indiana, Sealand's daughter by his first wife	—	Miss YOUNGE.	Mrs. JACKSON.
Lucinda, Sealand's daughter by his second wife	—	Miss PLATT.	Miss AMBROSE.
Phillis, maid to Lucinda	—	Mrs. ABINGTON.	Mrs. MATTOCKS.

S C E N E, L O N D O N.

THE
CONSCIOUS LOVERS.

ACT I. SCENE Sir John Bevil's House.

Enter Sir John Bevil and Humphrey.

Sir J. Bev. HAVE you ordered that I should not be interrupted while I am dressing?

Humph. Yes, Sir: I believ'd you had something of moment to say to me.

Sir J. Bev. Let me see, Humphrey; I think it is now full forty years since I first took thee, to be about my self.

Humph. I thank you, Sir, it has been an easy forty years; and I have pass'd 'em without much sickness, care, or labour.

Sir J. Bev. Thou hast a brave constitution: you are a year or two older than I am, firrah.

Humph. You have ever been of that mind, Sir.

Sir J. Bev. You knave, you know it: I took thee for thy gravity and sobriety, in my wild years.

Humph. Ah, Sir! our manners were form'd from our different fortunes, not our different age. Wealth gave a loose to your youth, and poverty put a restraint upon mine.

Sir J. Bev. Well, Humphrey, you know I have been a kind master to you: I have us'd you, for the ingenuous nature I observ'd in you from the beginning, more like an humble friend than a servant.

Humph. I humbly beg you'll be so tender of me, as to explain your commands, Sir, without any farther preparation.

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Sir J. Bev. I'll tell thee then. In the first place, this wedding of my son's, in all probability, (shut the door) will never be at all.

Humph. How, Sir! not be at all? for what reason is it carry'd on in appearance?

Sir J. Bev. Honest Humphrey, have patience, and I'll tell thee all in order. I have myself, in some part of my life, liv'd (indeed) with freedom, but, I hope, without reproach: Now, I thought liberty would be as little injurious to my son; therefore, as soon as he grew towards man, I indulg'd him in living after his own manner: I knew not how, otherwise, to judge of his inclination; for what can be concluded from a behaviour under restraint and fear? But what charms me above all expression is, that my son has never in the least action, the most distant hint or word, valued himself upon that great estate of his mother's, which, according to our marriage settlement, he has had ever since he came to age.

Humph. No, Sir; on the contrary, he seems afraid of appearing to enjoy it, before you, or any belonging to you—He is as dependant and resign'd to your will, as if he had not a farthing but what must come from your immediate bounty—You have ever acted like a good and generous father, and he like an obedient and grateful son.

Sir J. Bev. Nay, his carriage is so easy to all with whom he converses, that he is never assuming, never prefers himself to others, nor ever is guilty of that rough sincerity which a man is not call'd to, and certainly disoblige most of his acquaintance: to be short, Humphrey, his reputation was so fair in the world, that old Sealand, the great India merchant, has offered his only daughter, and sole heiress to that vast estate of his, as a wife for him; you may be sure I made no difficulties, the match was agreed on, and this very day named for the wedding.

Humph. What hinders the proceeding?

Sir J. Bev.

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Sir J. Bev. Don't interrupt me. You know, I was last Thursday at the masquerade; my son, you may remember, soon found us out——He knew his grandfather's habit, which I then wore; and tho' it was the mode, in the last age, yet the maskers, you know, follow'd us as if we had been the most monstrous figures in that whole assembly.

Humph. I remember indeed a young man of quality in the habit of a clown, that was particularly troublesome.

Sir J. Bev. Right——He was too much what he seem'd to be. You remember how impertinently he follow'd, and teaz'd us, and wou'd know who we were.

Humph. I know he has a mind to come into that particular. [*Afide.*

Sir J. Bev. Ay, he follow'd us, till the gentleman who led the lady in the Indian mantle presented that gay creature to the rustick, and bid him (like Cymon in the fable) grow polite, by falling in love, and let that worthy old gentleman alone, meaning me: The clown was not reform'd, but rudely persisted, and offer'd to force off my mask: with that the gentleman throwing off his own, appear'd to be my son, and in his concern for me, tore off that of the nobleman: at this they seiz'd each other, the company call'd the guards, and in the surprize, the lady swoon'd away; Upon which my son quitted his adversary, and had now no care but of the lady——when raising her in his arms, Art thou gone, cry'd he, for ever——forbid it Heav'n!——She revives at his known voice——and with the most familiar tho' modest gesture hangs in safety over his shoulder weeping, but wept as in the arms of one before whom she could give herself a loose, were she not under observation: while she hides her face in his neck, he carefully conveys her from the company.

Humph. I have observ'd this accident has dwelt upon you very strongly.

Sir J. Bev. Her uncommon air, her noble modesty,

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the dignity of her person, and the occasion itself, drew the whole assembly together; and I soon heard it buzz'd about, she was the adopted daughter of a famous sea-officer, who had serv'd in France. Now this unexpected and public discovery of my son's so deep concern for her——

Humph. Was what I suppose alarm'd Mr. Sealand in behalf of his daughter, to break off the match.

Sir J. Bev. You are right——He came to me yesterday, and said, he thought himself disengag'd from the bargain; being credibly informed my son was already marry'd, or worse, to the lady at the masquerade. I palliated matters, and insisted on our agreement; but we parted with little less than a direct breach between us.

Humph. Well, Sir; and what notice have you taken of all this to my young master?

Sir J. Bev. That's what I wanted to debate with you——I have said nothing to him yet——But look you, Humphrey——if there is so much in this amour of his, that he denies upon my summons to marry, I have cause enough to be offended; and then by my insisting upon his marrying to-day, I shall know how far he is engag'd to this lady in masquerade, and from thence only shall be able to take my measures: in the mean time, I would have you find out how far that rogue his man is let into his secret——He, I know, will play tricks as much to cross me, as to serve his master.

Humph. Why do you think so of him, Sir? I believe he is no worse than I was for you, at your son's age.

Sir J. Bev. I see it in the rascal's looks. But I have dwelt on these things too long: I'll go to my son immediately, and while I'm gone, your part is to convince his rogue Tom that I am in earnest. I'll leave him to you. [Exit Sir John Bevil.]

Humph. Well, tho' this father and son live as well together as possible, yet their fear of giving each other pain, is attended with constant mutual uneasiness.

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ness. ' I'm sure I have enough to do to be honest,
' and yet keep well with them both ; but they know
' I love 'em, and that makes the task less painful how-
' ever.'——Oh, here's the prince of poor coxcombs,
the representative of all the better fed than taught.—
Ho! ho! Tom, whither so gay and so airy this
morning?

Enter Tom, singing.

Tom. Sir, we servants of single gentlemen are
another kind of people than you domestic ordinary
drudges that do business: we are rais'd above you:
the pleasures of board-wages, tavern-dinners, and
many a clear gain: vails, alas! you never heard or
dreamt of.

Humph. Thou hast follies and vices enough for a
man of ten thousand a year, ' tho' 'tis but as t'other
' day that I sent for you to town, to put you into
' Mr. Sealand's family, that you might learn a little
' before I put you to my young master, who is too
' gentle for training such a rude thing as you were
' into proper obedience——You then pull'd off your
' hat to every one you met in the street, like a bash-
' ful great awkward cub as you were. But' your
great oaken cudgel, when you were a booby, became
you much better than that dangling stick at your
button now you are a fop. That's fit for nothing,
except it hangs there to be ready for your master's
hand when you are impertinent.

Tom. Uncle Humphrey, you know my master
scorns to strike his servants. You talk as if the world
was now, just as it was when my old master and you
were in your youth——when you went to dinner be-
cause it was so much a clock, when the great blow
was given in the hall at the pantry-door, and all the
family came out of their holes in such strange
dresses and formal faces as you see in the pictures in
our long gallery in the country.

Humph. Why, you wild rogue!

Tom. You could not fall to your dinner till a for-
mal fellow in a black gown said something over

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the meat, as if the cook had not made it ready enough.

Humph. Sirrah, who do you prate after? — Despising men of sacred characters! I hope you never heard my good young master talk so like a profligate!

Tom. Sir, I say you put upon me, when I first came to town, about being orderly, and the doctrine of wearing shams to make linen last clean a fortnight, keeping my cloaths fresh, and wearing a frock within doors.

Humph. Sirrah, I gave you those lessons, because I suppos'd at that time your master and you might have din'd at home every day, and cost you nothing; then you might have made a good family servant. But the gang you have frequented since at chocolate houses and taverns, in a continual round of noise and extravagance——

Tom. I don't know what you heavy inmates call noise and extravagance; but we gentlemen, who are well fed, and cut a figure, Sir, think it a fine life, and that we must be very pretty fellows who are kept only to be looked at.

Humph. Very well, Sir,—— I hope the fashion of being lewd and extravagant, despising of decency and order, is almost at an end, since it is arrived at persons of your quality.

Tom. Master Humphrey, ha! ha! you were an unhappy lad to be sent up to town in such queer days as you were: why now, Sir, the lacquies are the men of pleasure of the age; the top-gamesters; and many a lac'd coat about town have had their education in our party-coloured regiment — We are false lovers; have a taste of music, poetry, billet-doux, dress, politics, ruin damsels, and when we are weary of this lewd town, and have a mind to take up, whip into our masters wigs and linen, and marry fortunes.

Humph. Hey-day!

Tom. Nay, Sir, our order is carried up to the highest dignities and distinctions: step but into the

Painted

THE CONSCIOUS LOVERS. 11

Painted Chamber——and by our titles you'd take us all for men of quality——then again come down to the *Court of Requests*, and you see us all laying our broken heads together for the good of the nation: and tho' we never carry a question *nemine contradicente*, yet this I can say with a safe conscience, (and I wish every gentleman of our cloth could lay his hand upon his heart and say the same) that I never took so much as a single mug of beer for my vote in all my life.

Humph. Sirrah, there is no enduring your extravagance; I'll hear you prate no longer. I wanted to see you, to enquire how things go with your master, as far as you understand them: I suppose he knows he is to be married to-day.

Tom. Ay, Sir, he knows it, and is dress'd as gay as the sun; but, between you and I, my dear, he has a very heavy heart under all that gaiety. As soon as he was dress'd I retir'd, but overheard him sigh in the most heavy manner. He walk'd thoughtfully to and fro in the room, then went into his closet; when he came out he gave me this for his mistress, whose maid you know——

Humph. Is passionately fond of your fine person.

Tom. The poor fool is so tender, and loves to hear me talk of the world, and the plays, opera's, and *ridotto's*, for the winter; the parks and *Bellfize*, for our summer diversions; and lard! says she, you are so wild——but you have a world of humour.

Humph. Coxcomb! Well, but why don't you run with your master's letter to Mrs. Lucinda, as he ordered you?

Tom. Because Mrs. Lucinda is not so easily come at as you think for.

Humph. Not easily come at! Why, sirrah, are not her father and my old master agreed, that she and Mr. Bevil are to be one flesh before to-morrow morning?

Tom. It's no matter for that: her mother, it seems, Mrs. Sealand, has not agreed to it: and you must

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know, Mr. Humphrey, that in that family the grey mare is the better horse.

Humph. What do'st thou mean?

Tom. In one word, Mrs. Sealand pretends to have a will of her own, and has provided a relation of her's, a stiff, starch'd philosopher, and a wise fool, for her daughter; for which reason, for these ten days past, she has suffer'd no message nor letter from my master to come near her.

Humph. And where had you this intelligence?

Tom. From a foolish fond soul that can keep nothing from me——one that will deliver this letter too, if she is rightly manag'd.

Humph. What! her pretty handmaid, Mrs. Phillis?

Tom. Even she, Sir; this is the very hour, you know, she usually comes hither, under a pretence of a visit to your housekeeper forsooth, but in reality to have a glance at——

Humph. Your sweet face, I warrant you.

Tom. Nothing else in nature: you must know, I love to fret, and play with the little wanton.——

Humph. Play with the little wanton! What will this world come to!

Tom. I met her this morning in a new manteau and petticoat, not a bit the worse for her lady's wearing; and she has always new thoughts and new airs with new cloaths——then she never fails to steal some glance or gesture from every visitant at their house; and is indeed the whole town of coquets at second hand. But here she comes: in one motion she speaks and describes herself better than all the words in the world can.

Humph. Then I hope, dear Sir, when your own affair is over, you will be so good as to mind your master's with her.

Tom. Dear Humphrey, you know my master is my friend, and those are people I never forget.——

Humph. Sawciness itself! but I'll leave you to do your best for him.

[Exit.
Enter

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Enter Phillis.

Phil. O Mr. Thomas, is Mr. Sugar-key athoe—Lard, one is almost asham'd to pass along the streets. The town is quite empty, and no body of fashion left in it; and the ordinary people do so stare to see any thing, dress'd like a woman of condition, 'as it were on the same floor with them' pass by. Alas, alas! it is a sad thing to walk. O Fortune, Fortune!

Tom. What! a sad thing to walk? Why, Madam Phillis, do you wish yourself lame?

Phil. No, Mr. Tom, but I wish I were generally carry'd in a coach or chair, and of a fortune neither to stand or go, but to totter, or slide, to be short-sighted, or stare, to flier in the face, to look distant, to observe, to overlook, yet all become me; and, if I was rich, I could twire and loll as well as the best of them. O Tom! Tom! is it not a pity, that you should be so great a coxcomb, and I so great a coquet, and yet be such poor devils as we are?

Tom. Mrs. Phillis, I am your humble servant for that—

Phil. Yes, Mr. Thomas, I know how much you are my humble servant, and I know what you said to Mrs. Judy, upon seeing her in one of her Lady's cast manteaus: That any one would have thought her the lady, and that she had ordered the other to wear it till it sat easy—for now only it was becoming:—To my Lady it was only a covering, to Mrs. Judy it was a habit. This you said, after somebody or other. O Tom! Tom! thou art as false and as base, as the best gentleman of them all; but, you wretch, talk to me no more on the old odious subject, don't, I say.

Tom. I know not how to resist your commands, madam.

[In a submissive tone, retiring.]

Phil. Commands about parting are grown mighty easy to you of late.

Tom. Oh, I have her: I have nettled and put her into the right temper to be wrought upon, and set a prating,

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prating. [*Afide.*]—Why truly, to be plain with you, Mrs. Phillis, I can take little comfort of late in frequenting your house.

Phil. Pray, Mr. Thomas, what is it all of a sudden offends your nicety at our house?

Tom. I don't care to speak particulars, but I dislike the whole.

Phil. I thank you, Sir, I am a part of that whole.

Tom. Mistake me not, good Phillis.

Phil. Good Phillis! saucy enough. But, however——

Tom. I say, it is that thou art a part, which gives me pain for the disposition of the whole. You must know, Madam, to be serious, I am a man, at the bottom, of prodigious nice honour. You are too much exposed to company at your house: To be plain, I don't like so many, that would be your Mistress's lovers, whispering to you.

Phil. Don't think to put that upon me. You say this, because I wrung you to the heart, when I touch'd your guilty conscience about Judy.

Tom. Ah Phillis! Phillis! if you but knew my heart!

Phil. I know too much on't.

Tom. Nay then, poor Crispo's fate and mine are one——Therefore give me leave to say, or sing at least, as he does upon the same occasion——

Se vedette, &c. [*sings.*]

Phil. What, do you think I'm to be fob'd off with a song? I don't question but you have sung the same to Mrs. Judy too.

Tom. Don't disparage your charms, good Phillis, with jealousy of so worthless an object; besides, she is a poor hussy, and if you doubt the sincerity of my love, you will allow me to be true to my interest. You are a fortune, Phillis——

Phil. What would the fop be at now? In good time indeed, you shall be setting up for a fortune!

Tom. Dear Mrs. Phillis, you have such a spirit that we shall never be dull in marriage, when we come

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come together. But I tell you, you are a fortune, and you have an estate in my hands.

[He pulls out a purse, she eyes it.]

Phil. What pretence have I to what is in your hands, Mr. Tom?

Tom. As thus: there are hours, you know, when a lady is neither pleas'd nor displeas'd, neither sick nor well, when she lolls or loiters, when she's without desires, from having more of every thing than she knows what to do with.

Phil. Well, what then?

Tom. When she has not life enough to keep her bright eyes quite open, to look at her own dear image in the glass.

Phil. Explain thyself, and don't be so fond of thy own prating.

Tom. There as also prosperous and good-natur'd moments, as when a knot or a patch is happily fix'd; when the complexion particularly flourishes.

Phil. Well, what then? I have not patience!

Tom. Why then——or on the like occasions——we servants, who have skill to know how to time business, see when such a pretty folded thing as this *[shows a letter]* may be presented, laid, or dropp'd, as best suits the present humour. And, Madam, because it is a long wearisome journey, to run through all the several stages of a lady's temper, my master, who is the most reasonable man in the world, presents you this to bear your charges on the road.

[Gives her the purse.]

Phil. Now you think me a corrupt huffey.

Tom. Oh fie, I only think you'll take the letter.

Phil. Nay, I know you do; but I know my own innocence; I take it for my mistress's sake.

Tom. I know it, my pretty one, I know it.

Phil. Yes, I say I do it, because I would not have my mistress deluded by one who gives no proof of his passion; but I'll talk more of this, as you see me on my way home.——No, Tom, I assure thee, I take this trash of thy master's, not for the value of
of

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of the thing, but as it convinces me he has a true respect for my mistress. I remember a verse to the purpose:

*They may be false who languish and complain;
But they who part with money never feign.*

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. Bevil Junior's Lodgings.

Bevil junior, reading.

Bev. jun. These moral writers practise virtue after death: this charming vision of Mirza! such an author, consulted in a morning, sets the spirit for the vicissitudes of the day, better than the glass does a man's person: but what a day have I to go thro'! to put on an easy look with an aking heart.——If this lady, my father urges me to marry, should not refuse me, my dilemma is insupportable. But why should I fear it? is not she in equal distress with me? has not the letter, I have sent her this morning, confess my inclination to another? Nay, have I not moral assurances of her engagements too, to my friend Myrtle? It's impossible but she must give into it: for, sure to be deny'd is a favour any man may pretend to. It must be so——well then, with the assurance of being rejected, I think I may confidently say to my father, I am ready to marry her——Then let me resolve upon (what I am not very good at, tho' it is) an honest dissimulation.

Enter Tom.

Tom. Sir John Bevil, Sir, is in the next room.

Bev. jun. Dunce! why did not you bring him in?

Tom. I told him, Sir, you were in your closet.

Bev. jun. I thought you had known, Sir, it was my duty to see my father any where.

[*Going himself to the door.*

Tom. The Devil's in my master! he has always more wit than I have.

[*Aside.*

Bevil jun. introducing Sir John.

Bev. jun. Sir, you are the most gallant, the most complaisant of all parents——sure 'tis not a compliment.

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pliment to say these lodgings are yours ——— why wou'd you not walk in, Sir?

Sir J. Bev. I was loth to interrupt you unseasonably on your wedding-day.

Bev. jun. One to whom I am beholden for my birth-day, might have used less ceremony.

Sir J. Bev. Well, son, I have intelligence you have writ to your mistress this morning: It would please my curiosity to know the contents of a wedding-day letter, for courtship must then be over.

Bev. jun. I assure you, Sir, there was no insolence in it, upon the prospect of such a vast fortune's being added to our family; but much acknowledgement of the lady's greater desert.

Sir J. Bev. But, dear Jack, are you in earnest in all this? and will you really marry her?

Bev. jun. Did I ever disobey any command of yours, Sir? nay, any inclination that I saw you bent upon?

Sir J. Bev. Why, I can't say you have, son; but, methinks in this whole business, you have not been so warm as I could have wish'd you: you have visited her, it's true, but you have not been particular. Every one knows you can say and do as handsome things as any man; but you have done nothing, but liv'd in the general, being complaisant only.

Bev. jun. As I am ever prepared to marry, if you bid me, so I am ready to let it alone if you will have me.

[*Humphrey enters unobserv'd.*]

Sir J. Bev. Look you there now! why, what am I to think of this so absolute and so indifferent a resignation?

Bev. jun. Think, that I am still your son, Sir, ——— Sir, ——— you have been married, and I have not. And you have, Sir, found the inconvenience there is, when a man weds with too much love in his head. I have been told, Sir, that at the time you married, you made a mighty bustle

on

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on the occasion. There was challenging and fighting, scaling walls——locking up the lady——and the gallant under an arrest, for fear of killing all his rivals.——Now, Sir, I suppose you having found the ill consequences of these strong passions and prejudices, in preference of one woman to another, in case of a man's becoming a widower——

Sir J. Bev. How is this!

Bev. jun. I say, Sir, experience has made you wiser in your care of me——for, Sir, since you lost my dear mother, your time has been so heavy, so lonely, and so tasteless, that you are so good as to guard me against the like unhappiness, by marrying me prudentially, by way of bargain and sale. For, as you well judge, a woman that is espous'd for a fortune, is yet a better bargain, if she dies; for then a man well enjoys what he did marry, the money; and is disencumber'd of what he did not marry, the woman.

Sir J. Bev. But pray, Sir, do you think Lucinda then a woman of such little merit?

Bev. jun. Pardon me, Sir, I don't carry it so far neither; I am rather afraid I shall like her too well: she has, for one of her fortune, a great many need-
less and superfluous good qualities.

Sir J. Bev. I am afraid, Son, there's something I don't see yet; something that's smother'd under all this raillery.

Bev. jun. Not in the least, Sir. If the lady is dress'd and ready, you see I am. I suppose the lawyers are ready too.

Humph. This may grow warm if I don't interpose.

[*Aside.*]

Enter Humphrey.

Sir, Mr. Sealand is at the Coffee-house, and has sent to speak with you.

Sir J. Bev. Oh! that's well! then I warrant the lawyers are ready. Son, you'll be in the way, you say——

Bev.

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Bev. jun. If you please, Sir, I'll take a chair, and go to Mr. Sealand's, where the young lady and I will wait your leisure.

Sir J. Bev. By no means——the old fellow will be so vain if he sees——

Bev. jun. Ay——but the young lady, Sir, will think me so indifferent——

Humph. Ay——there you are right——press your readiness to go to the bride——he won't let you.

[*Aside to Bev. jun.*]

Bev. jun. Are you sure of that?

[*Aside to Humph.*]

Humph. How he likes being prevented! [*Aside.*]

Sir J. Bev. No, no: you are an hour or two too early. [*Looking on his watch.*]

Bev. jun. You'll allow me, Sir, to think it too late to visit a beautiful, virtuous young woman, in the pride and bloom of life, ready to give herself to my arms; and to place her happiness or misery, for the future, in being agreeable or displeasing to me, is a——call a chair.

Sir J. Bev. No, no, no, dear Jack! besides, this Sealand is a moody old fellow: there is no dealing with some people, but by managing with indifference. We must leave to him the conduct of this day. It is the last of his commanding his daughter.

Bev. jun. Sir, he can't take it ill, that I am impatient to be her's.

Sir J. Bev. Pray let me govern in this matter: you can't tell how humourfome old fellows are:——there's no offering reason to some of 'em, especially when they are rich——if my son should see him, before I've brought old Sealand into better temper, the match would be impracticable.

[*Aside.*]

Humph. Pray, Sir, let me beg you, to let Mr. Bevil go.—See, whether he will or not. [*Aside to Sir*

John.]*—[Then to Bev.]* Pray, Sir, command yourself;

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self; since you see my master is positive, it is better you should not go.

Bev. Jun. My father commands me, as to the object of my affections; but I hope he will not, as to the warmth and height of them.

Sir J. Bev. So! I must even leave things as I found them; and in the mean time, at least, keep old Sealand out of his fight.—Well, son, I'll go myself and take orders in your affair.—You'll be in the way, I suppose, if I send to you—I'll leave your old friend with you.—Humphrey—don't let him stir, d'ye hear? your servant, your servant. *[Exit Sir John.]*

Humph. I have a sad time on't, Sir, between you and my master——I see you are unwilling, and I know his violent inclinations for the match—I must betray neither, and yet deceive you both, for your common good—Heav'n grant a good end of this matter: but there is a lady, Sir, that gives your father much trouble and sorrow—You'll pardon me.

Bev. jun. Humphrey, I know thou art a friend to both; and in that confidence, I dare tell thee—That lady—is a woman of honour and virtue. You may assure yourself, I never will marry without my father's consent; but give me leave to say too, this declaration does not come up to a promise, that I will take whomsoever he pleases.

Humph. Come, Sir, I wholly understand you: you would engage my services to free you from this woman, whom my master intends you, to make way, in time, for the woman you have really a mind to.

Bev. jun. Honest Humphrey, you have always been an useful friend to my father, and myself: I beg you continue your good offices, and don't let us come to the necessity of a dispute; for if we should dispute, I must either part with more than life, or lose the best of fathers.

Humph. My dear master, were I but worthy to know this secret, that so near concerns you, my life, my
all

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all should be engag'd to serve you. This, Sir, I dare promise, that I am sure I will and can be secret: your trust, at worst, but leaves you where you were; and if I cannot serve you, I will at once be plain, and tell you so.

Bev. jun. That's all I ask: Thou hast made it now my interest to trust thee—Be patient then, and hear the story of my heart.

Humph. I am all attention, Sir.

Bev. jun. You may remember, Humphrey, that in my last travels, my father grew uneasy at my making so long a stay at Toulon.

Humph. I remember it: he was apprehensive some woman had laid hold of you.

Bev. jun. His fears were just; for there I first saw this lady: she is of English birth: her father's name was Danvers, a younger brother of an ancient family, and originally an eminent merchant of Bristol; who, upon repeated misfortunes, was reduced to go privately to the Indies. In this retreat Providence again grew favourable to his industry, and, in six years time, restored him to his former fortunes: on this he sent directions over, that his wife and little family should follow him to the Indies. His wife, impatient to obey such welcome orders, would not wait the leisure of a convey, but took the first occasion of a single ship, and with her husband's sister only, and this daughter, then scarce seven years old, undertook the fatal voyage: for here, poor creature, she lost her liberty, and life; she, and her family, with all they had; were unfortunately taken by a privateer from Toulon. Being thus made a prisoner, though, as such, not ill treated, yet the fright, the shock, and cruel disappointment, seiz'd with such violence upon her unhealthy frame, she sicken'd, pined and died at sea.

Humph. Poor soul! O the helpless infant!

Bev. Her sister yet surviv'd, and had the care of her: the captain too proved to have humanity, and became a father to her; for having himself married

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married an English woman, and being childless, he brought home into Toulon this her little country-woman; presenting her, with all her dead mother's moveables of value, to his wife, to be educated as his own adopted daughter.

Humph. Fortune here seem'd, again, to smile on her.

Bev. Only to make her frowns more terrible: for, in his height of fortune, this captain too, her benefactor, unfortunately was kill'd at sea, and dying intestate, his estate fell wholly to an advocate his brother, who coming soon to take possession, there found (among his other riches) this blooming virgin, at his mercy.

Humph. He durst not, sure, abuse his power!

Bev. No wonder if his pamper'd blood was fired at the sight of her—in short, he lov'd; but, when all arts and gentle means had fail'd to move, he offer'd too his menaces in vain, denouncing vengeance on her cruelty; demanding her to account for all her maintenance, from her childhood; seiz'd on her little fortune, as his own inheritance, and was dragging her by violence to prison; when Providence at the instant interpos'd, and sent me, by miracle, to relieve her.

Humph. 'Twas Providence indeed! but pray, Sir, after all this trouble, how came this lady at last to England?

Bev. The disappointed advocate, finding she had so unexpected a support, on cooler thoughts, descended to a composition; which I, without her knowledge, secretly discharg'd.

Humph. That generous concealment made the obligation double.

Bev. Having thus obtain'd her liberty, I prevail'd, not without some difficulty, to see her safe to England; where no sooner arriv'd, but my father, jealous of my being imprudently engaged, immediately proposed this other fatal match that hangs upon my quiet.

Humph.

Humph.

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Humph. I find, Sir, you are irrecoverably fix'd up on this lady.

Bev. As my vital life dwells in my heart——and yet you see——what I do to please my father: walk in this pageantry of dress, this splendid covering of sorrow——But, Humphrey, you have your lesson.

Humph. Now, Sir, I have but one material question——

Bev. Ask it freely.

Humph. Is it, then, your own passion for this secret lady, or hers for you, that gives you this aversion to the match your father has proposed you?

Bev. I shall appear, Humphrey, more romantic in my answer, than in all the rest of my story; for tho' I doat on her to death, and have no little reason to believe she has the same thoughts for me; yet in all my acquaintance, and utmost privacies with her, I never once directly told her, that I loved.

Humph. How was it possible to avoid it?

Bev. My tender obligations to my father have laid so inviolable a restraint upon my conduct, that 'till I have his consent to speak, I am determin'd, on that subject, to be dumb for ever.

Humph. Well, Sir, to your praise be it spoken, you are certainly the most unfashionable lover in Great Britain.

Enter Tom.

Tom. Sir, Mr. Myrtle's at the next door, and, if you are at leisure, will be glad to wait on you.

Bev. Whenever he pleases——hold, Tom! did you receive no answer to my letter?

Tom. I was desir'd to call again; for I was told, her mother would not let her be out of her sight; but about an hour hence, Mrs. Lettice said, I should certainly have one.

Bev. Very well.

Humph. Sir, I will take another opportunity: in the mean time, I only think it proper to tell you, that from a secret I know, you may appear to your father as forward as you please, to marry Lucinda,

without

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without the least hazard of its coming to a conclusion
—— Sir, your most obedient servant.

Bev. Honest Humphrey, continue, but my friend, in this exigence, and you shall always find me yours.
[*Exit Humph.*] I long to hear how my letter has succeeded with Lucinda—— ‘ But I think it can-
‘ not fail: for, at worst, were it possible she could
‘ take it ill, her resentment of my indifference may
‘ as probably occasion a delay, as her taking it
‘ right.’—— Poor Myrtle, what terrors must he be in all this while?—— Since he knows she is offer’d to me, and refused to him, there is no conversing, or taking any measures, with him, for his own service—— But I ought to bear with my friend, and use him as one in adversity;

*All his disquiets by my own I prove,
The greatest grief’s perplexity in love.* [Exeunt.

A C T II. SCENE continues.

Enter Bevil jun. and Tom.

Tom. **S**IR, Mr. Myrtle.
Bev. jun. Very well—do you step again, and wait for an answer to my letter.

Enter Myrtle.

Bev. jun. Well, Charles, why so much care in thy countenance? Is there any thing in this world deserves it? You, who used to be so gay, so open, so vacant!

Myrt. I think we have of late chang’d complexions. You, who us’d to be much the graver man, are now all air in your behaviour—— But the cause of my concern, may, for ought I know, be the same object that gives you all this satisfaction. In a word, I am told that you are this very day (and your dress confirms me in it) to be married to Lucinda.

Bev. jun. You are not misinform’d.—Nay, put not on the terrors of a rival, till you hear me out. I shall disoblige

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disoblige the best of fathers, if I don't seem ready to marry Lucinda: and you know I have ever told you, you might make use of my secret resolution never to marry her, for your own service, as you please. But I am now driven to the extremity of immediately refusing, or complying, unless you help me to escape the match.

Myrt. Escape! Sir, neither her merit nor her fortune are below your acceptance.—Escaping, do you call it?

Bev. jun. Dear Sir, do you wish I should desire the match?

Myrt. No—but such is my humorous and sickly state of mind, since it has been able to relish nothing but Lucinda, that, tho' I must owe my happiness to your aversion to this marriage, I can't bear to hear her spoken of with levity or unconcern.

Bev. jun. Pardon me, Sir; I shall transgress that way no more. She has understanding, beauty, shape, complexion, wit—

Myrt. Nay, dear Bevil, don't speak of her as if you lov'd her, neither.

Bev. jun. Why then, to give you ease at once, tho' I allow Lucinda to have good sense, wit, beauty, and virtue; I know another, in whom these qualities appear to me more amiable than in her.

Myrt. There you spoke like a reasonable and good-natur'd friend. When you acknowledge her merit, and own your prepossession for another, at once, you gratify my fondness, and cure my jealousy.

Bev. jun. But all this while you take no notice, you have no apprehension of another man, that has twice the fortune of either of us.

Myrt. Cimberton! Hang him, a formal philosophical, pedantic coxcomb—For the sot, with all these crude notions of divers things, under the direction of great vanity, and very little judgment, shews his strongest bias is avarice; which is so predominant in him, that he will examine the limbs of his mistress with the caution of a jockey, and pays no

B

more

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more compliment to her personal charms, than if she were a mere breeding animal.

Bew. jun. Are you sure that is not affected? I have known some women sooner set on fire by that sort of negligence than by——

Myrt. No, no; hang him, the rogue has no art, it is pure simple insolence and stupidity.

Bew. jun. Yet, with all this, I don't take him for a fool.

Myrt. I own the man is not a natural; he has a very quick sense, tho' very slow understanding.—— He says indeed many things, that want only the circumstances of time and place to be very just and agreeable.

Bew. jun. Well, you may be sure of me, if you can disappoint him: but my intelligence says, the mother has actually sent for the conveyancer, to draw articles for his marriage with Lucinda; tho' those for mine with her, are, by her father's order, ready for signing: but it seems she has not thought fit to consult either him or his daughter in the matter.

Myrt. Pshaw! A poor troublesome woman—— Neither Lucinda nor her father will ever be brought to comply with it — besides, I am sure Cimberton can make no settlement upon her, without the concurrence of his great uncle Sir Geoffry in the West.

Bew. jun. Well, Sir, and I can tell you, that's the very point that is now laid before her council; to know whether a firm settlement can be made, without this uncle's actual joining in it.—— Now pray consider, Sir, when my affair with Lucinda comes, as it soon must, to an open rupture, how are you sure that Cimberton's fortune may not then tempt her father too, to hear his proposals?

Myrt. There you are right indeed, that must be provided against.—— Do you know who are her council?

Bew. jun. Yes, for your service I have found out that too, they are Serjeant Bramble and Old Target —— by the way, they are neither of 'em known in

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in the family : now I was thinking why you might not put a couple of false council upon her, to delay and confound matters a little—besides, it may probably let you into the bottom of her whole design against you.

Myrt. As how pray ?

Bev. jun. Why, can't you slip on a black wig and a gown, and be Old Bramble yourself?

Myrt. Ha ! I don't dislike it—but what shall I do for a brother in the case ?

Bev. jun. What think you of my fellow, Tom ? the rogue's intelligent, and is a good mimick : all his part will be but to stutter heartily, for that's Old Target's case ——— 'Nay, it would be an immoral thing to mock him, were it not that his impertinence is the occasion of its breaking out to that degree'——the conduct of the scene will chiefly lie upon you.

Myrt. I like it of all things : if you'll send Tom to my chambers, I will give him full instructions : this will certainly give me occasion to raise difficulties, to puzzle, or confound her project for a while, at least.

Bev. jun. I'll warrant you success : so far we are right then : And now, Charles, your apprehension of my marrying her, is all you have to get over.

Myrt. Dear Bevil ! tho' I know you are my friend, yet when I abstract myself from my own interest in the thing, I know no objection she can make to you, or you to her, and therefore hope——

Bev. jun. Dear Myrtle, I am as much obliged to you for the cause of your suspicion, as I am offended at the effect : but be assured, I am taking measures for your certain security, and that all things with regard to me will end in your entire satisfaction.

Myrt. Well, I'll promise you to be as easy and as confident as I can ; tho' I cannot but remember that I have more than life at stake on your fidelity.

[Going.

Bev. jun. Then depend upon it, you have no chance against you.

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Myrt. Nay, no ceremony, you know I must be going. [Exit *Myrt.*

Bev. jun. Well! this is another instance of the perplexities which arise too, in faithful friendship. 'We must often, in this life, go on in our good offices, even under the displeasure of those to whom we do them, in compassion to their weaknesses and mistakes'——But all this while poor Indiana is tortured with the doubt of me! 'She has no support or comfort, but in my fidelity, yet sees me daily press'd to marriage with another! How painful, in such a crisis, must be every hour she thinks on me? I'll let her see, at least, my conduct to her is not chang'd:' I'll take this opportunity to visit her; for tho' the religious vow, I have made to my father, restrains me from ever marrying, without his approbation, yet that confines me not from seeing a virtuous woman, that is the pure delight of my eyes, and the guiltless joy of my heart: But the best condition of human life is but a gentler misery.

*To hope for perfect happiness is vain,
And love has ever its allays of pain.* [Exit.

Enter Isabella, and Indiana, in her own lodgings.

Isab. Yes—I say 'tis artifice, dear child; I say to thee again and again, 'tis all skill and management.

Ind. Will you persuade me there can be an ill design, in supporting me in the condition of a woman of quality? attended, dress'd, and lodg'd like one; in my appearance abroad, and my furniture at home, every way in the most sumptuous manner, and he that does it has an artifice, a design in it?

Isab. Yes, yes.

Ind. And all this without so much as explaining to me, that all about me comes from him!

Isab. Ay, ay,—the more for that — that keeps the title to all you have, the more in him.

Ind. The more in him! —— He scorns the thought——

Isab. Then he—he—he——

Ind. Well, be not so eager.—If he is an ill man, let

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Let us look into his stratagems. Here is another of them. [*Shewing a letter.*] Here's two hundred and fifty pounds in bank notes, with these words, "To pay for the set of dressing-plate, which will be brought home to-morrow." Why, dear aunt, now here's another piece of skill for you, which I own I cannot comprehend—and it is with a bleeding heart I hear you say any thing to the disadvantage of Mr. Bevil. When he is present, I look upon him as one to whom I owe my life, and the support of it: Then again, as the man who loves me with sincerity and honour. When his eyes are cast another way, and I dare survey him, my heart is painfully divided between shame and love — 'Oh! cou'd I tell you!——'

Isab. Ah! You need not: I imagine all this for you.

Ind. This is my state of mind in his presence; and when he is absent, you are ever dinning my ears with notions of the arts of men; that his hidden bounty, his respectful conduct, his careful provision for me, after his preserving me from utmost misery, are certain signs he means nothing but to make I know not what of me?

Isab. Oh! you have a sweet opinion of him, truly!

Ind. I have, when I am with him, ten thousand things, besides my sex's natural decency and shame, to suppress my heart, that yearns to thank, to praise, to say it loves him: I say, thus it is with me while I see him; and in his absence I am entertain'd with nothing, but your endeavours to tear this amiable image from my heart; and, in its stead, to place a base dissembler, an artful invader of my happiness, my innocence, my honour.

Isab. Ah poor soul! has not his plot taken? don't you die for him? has not the way he has taken, been the most proper with you? Oh! ho! he has sense, and has judg'd the thing right.

Ind. Go on then, since nothing can answer you: say what you will of him. Heigh! ho!

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Ifab. Heigh! ho! indeed. It is better to say so, as you are now, than as many others are. There are, among the destroyers of women, the gentle, the generous, the mild, the affable, the humble, who all, soon after their success in their designs, turn to the contrary of those characters. I will own to you, Mr. Bevil carries his hypocrisy the best of any man living, but still he is a man, and therefore a hypocrite. 'They have usurp'd an exemption from shame, for any baseness, any cruelty towards us.' They embrace without love; they make vows, without conscience of obligation; they are partners, nay, seducers to the crime, wherein they pretend to be less guilty.

Ind. That's truly observ'd. [*Aside.*]
But what's all this to Bevil?

Ifab. This it is to Bevil, and all mankind. 'Trust not those, who will think the worse of you for your confidence in them.' Serpents, who lie in wait for doves: Won't you be on your guard against those who would betray you? Won't you doubt those who would condemn you for believing 'em? 'Take it from me: Fair and natural dealing is to invite injuries, 'tis bleating to escape wolves who would devour you!' Such is the world,—and such (since the behaviour of one man to myself) have I believ'd all the rest of the sex. [*Aside.*]

Ind. I will not doubt the truth of Bevil, I will not doubt it: He has not spoke it by an organ that is given to lying: His eyes are all that have ever told me that he was mine: I know his virtue, I know his filial piety, and ought to trust his management with a father, to whom he has uncommon obligations. What have I to be concern'd for? my lesson is very short. If he takes me for ever, my purpose of life is only to please him. If he leaves me (which Heaven avert) I know he'll do it nobly; and I shall have nothing to do but to learn to die, after worse than death has happen'd to me.

Ifab. Ay do, persist in your credulity! flatter yourself

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self that a man of his figure and fortune will make himself the jest of the town, and marry a handsome beggar for love.

Ind. The town! I must tell you, Madam, the fools that laugh at Mr. Bevil, will but make themselves more ridiculous: his actions are the result of thinking, and he has sense enough to make even virtue fashionable.

Isab. 'O' my conscience he has turn'd her head! Come, come; if he were the honest fool you take him for, why has he kept you here these three weeks, without sending you to Bristol, in search of your father, your family, and your relations?

Ind. I am convinc'd he still designs it; 'and that ' nothing keeps him here, but the necessity of not ' coming to a breach with his father, in regard to the ' match he has propos'd him.' Beside, has he not writ to Bristol? and has not he advice that my father has not been heard of there, almost these twenty years?

Isab. All sham, mere evasion; he is afraid, if he should carry you thither, your honest relations may take you out of his hands, and so blow up all his wicked hopes at once.

Ind. Wicked hopes! did I ever give him any such?

Isab. Has he ever given you any honest ones? can you say, in your conscience, he has ever once offer'd to marry you?

Ind. No! but by his behaviour I am convinc'd he will offer it, the moment 'tis in his power, or consistent with his honour, to make such a promise good to me.

Isab. His honour!

Ind. I will rely upon it; therefore desire you will not make my life uneasy, by these ungrateful jealousies of one, to whom I am, and wish to be oblig'd: for from his integrity alone, I have resolv'd to hope for happiness.

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Ifab. Nay, I have done my duty; if you won't see, at your peril be it——

Ind. Let it be——This is his hour of visiting me.

Ifab. Oh! to be sure, keep up your form; don't see him in a bed-chamber: This is pure prudence, when she is liable, wherever he meets her, to be convey'd where'er he pleases. [Apart.]

Ind. All the rest of my life is but waiting till he comes: I live only when I'm with him. [Exit.]

Ifab. Well, go thy ways, thou wilful innocent! I once had almost as much love for a man, who poorly left me to marry an estate——And I am now, against my will, what they call an Old Maid——but I will not let the peevishness of that condition grow upon me——only keep up the suspicion of it, to prevent this creature's being any other than a virgin, except upon proper terms. [Exit.]

Re-enter Indiana speaking to a servant.

Ind. Desire Mr. Bevil to walk in——Design! impossible! A base designing mind could never think of what he hourly puts in practice——And yet, since the late rumour of his marriage, he seems more reserv'd than formerly——he sends in too, before he sees me, to know if I am at leisure——such new respect may cover coldness in the heart——it certainly makes me thoughtful——I'll know the worst, at once: I'll lay such fair occasions in his way, that it shall be impossible to avoid an explanation——for these doubts are insupportable!——But see! he comes, and clears them all.

Enter Bevil.

Bev. Madam, your most obedient——I am afraid I broke in upon your rest last night——'twas very late before we parted; but 'twas your own fault: I never saw you in such agreeable humour.

Ind. I am extremely glad we were both pleas'd; for I thought I never saw you better company.

Bev. Me, Madam! you rally; I said very little.

Ind. But, I am afraid, you heard me say a great deal;

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deal; and when a woman is in the talking vein, the most agreeable thing a man can do, you know, is to have patience to hear her.

Bev. Then it's pity, Madam, you should ever be silent, that we might be always agreeable to one another.

Ind. If I had your talent, or power, to make my actions speak for me, I might indeed be silent, and yet pretend to something more than the agreeable..

Bev. If I might be vain of any thing, in my power, Madam, 'tis that my understanding, from all your sex, has mark'd you out, as the most deserving object of my esteem.

Ind. Should I think I deserve this, 'twere enough to make my vanity forfeit the very esteem you offer me.

Bev. How so, Madam?

Ind. Because esteem is the result of reason, and to deserve it from good-sense, the height of human glory; nay, I had rather a man of honour should pay me that; than all the homage of a sincere and humble love.

Bev. jun. You certainly distinguish right, Madam: love often kindles from external merit only——

Ind. But esteem arises from a higher source, the merit of the soul——

Bev. jun. True——And great souls only can deserve it.

[*Bowing respectfully.*]

Ind. Now, I think, they are greater still, that can so charitably part with it.

Bev. jun. Now, Madam, you make me vain, since the utmost pride, and pleasure of my life is, that I esteem you——as I ought.

Ind. As he ought! still more perplexing! he neither saves, nor kills my hope.

[*Aside.*]

Bev. jun. But Madam, we grow grave methinks——Let's find some other subject——Pray how did you like the opera last night?

Ind. First give me leave to thank you for my tickets.

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Bev. jun. O! your servant, Madam——‘ But pray tell me, you now, who are never partial to the fashion, I fancy, must be the properest judge of a mighty dispute among the ladies, that is, whether Crispo or Griselda is the more agreeable entertainment.

‘ *Ind.* With submission now, I cannot be a proper judge of this question.

‘ *Bev. jun.* How so, Madam?

‘ *Ind.* Because I find I have a partiality for one of them.

‘ *Bev. jun.* Pray which is that?

‘ *Ind.* I do not know——there’s something in that rural cottage of Griselda, her forlorn condition, her poverty, her solitude, her resignation, her innocent slumbers, and that lulling *Dolce Sogno* that’s sung over her; it had an effect upon me, that—in short I never was so well deceiv’d at any of them.

‘ *Bev. jun.* Oh! Now then, I can account for the dispute: Griselda, it seems, is the distress of an injur’d innocent woman: Crispo, that only of a man in the same condition; therefore the men are mostly concern’d for Crispo, and, by a natural indulgence, both sexes for Griselda.

‘ *Ind.* So that judgment, you think, ought to be for one, tho’ fancy and complaisance have got ground for the other. Well! I believe you will never give me leave to dispute with you on any subject; for I own, Crispo has its charms for me too: though in the main, all the pleasure the best opera gives us, is but mere sensation.——Methink it’s pity the mind can’t have a little more share in the entertainment.——The music’s certainly fine; but, in my thoughts, there’s none of your composers come up to Old Shakespear and Otway.

‘ *Bev. jun.* How, Madam! why if a woman of your sense were to say this in the drawing-room.—’

Enter a servant.

Serv. Sir, here’s Signiør Carbonelli says he waits your commands in the next room.

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Bev. jun. A propos! You were saying yesterday, Madam, you had a mind to hear him——will you give him leave to entertain you now?

Ind. By all means: desire the gentleman to walk in. [Exit servant.]

Bev. jun. I fancy you will find something in this hand, that is uncommon.

Ind. You are always finding ways, Mr. Bevil, to make life seem less tedious to me.——

Enter Music-master.
When the gentleman pleases.

After a sonata is play'd, Bevil waits on the master to the door, &c.

Bev. jun. You smile, Madam, to see me so complaisant to one, whom I pay for his visit: Now, I own, I think it is not enough barely to pay those, whose talents are superior to our own (I mean such talents, as would become our condition, if we had them:) methinks we ought to do something more, than barely gratify them, for what they do at our command, only because their fortune is below us.

Ind. You say I smile: I assure you it was a smile of approbation; for indeed, I cannot but think it the distinguishing part of a gentleman, to make his superiority of fortune as easy to his inferiors, as he can.——Now once more to try him. [*Aside.*]——I was saying just now, I believed you would never let me dispute with you, and I dare say, it will always be so: however I must have your opinion upon a subject, which created a debate between my aunt and me, just before you came hither: she would needs have it, that no man ever does any extraordinary kindness or service for a woman, but for his own sake.

Bev. jun. Well, Madam! indeed I can't but be of her mind.

Ind. What, tho' he should maintain, and support her, without demanding any thing of her, on her part?

Bev. jun. Why, Madam, is making an expence, in

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the service of a valuable woman (for such I must suppose her) though she should never do him any favour, nay, though she should never know who did her such service, such a mighty heroic business?

Ind. Certainly! I should think he must be a man of an uncommon mold.

Bev. jun. Dear Madam, why so? 'tis but, at best, a better taste in expence: to bestow upon one, whom he may think one of the ornaments of the whole creation, to be conscious, that from his superfluity, an innocent, a virtuous spirit is supported above the temptations and sorrows of life! that he sees satisfaction, health, and gladness in her countenance, while he enjoys the happiness of seeing her (as that I will suppose too, or he must be too abstracted, too insensible) I say, if he is allowed to delight in that prospect; alas! what mighty matter is there in all this?

Ind. No mighty matter, in so disinterested a friendship!

Bev. jun. Disinterested! I can't think him so: your hero, Madam, is no more, than what every gentleman ought to be, and I believe very many are—He is only one, who takes more delight in reflections, than in sensations: he is more pleased with thinking, than eating; that's the utmost you can say of him — Why, Madam, a greater expence, than all this, men lay out upon an unnecessary stable of horses.

Ind. Can you be sincere in what you say?

Bev. jun. You may depend upon it, if you know any such man, he does not love dogs inordinately,

Ind. No, that he does not.

Bev. jun. Nor cards, nor dice.

Ind. No.

Bev. jun. Nor bottle companions.

Ind. No.

Bev. jun. Nor loose women.

Ind. No, I'm sure he does not.

Bev. jun. Take my word then, if your admired
hero

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hero is not liable to any of these kind of demands, there's no such preheminance in this, as you imagine: nay this way of expence you speak of is what exalts and raises him that has a taste for it: and, at the same time, his delight is incapable of satiety, disgust, or penitence.

Ind. But still, I insist, his having no private interest in the action makes it prodigious, almost incredible.

Bev. jun. Dear Madam, I never knew you more mistaken: Why, who can be more an usurer, than he, who lays out his money in such valuable purchases? If pleasure be worth purchasing, how great a pleasure is it to him, who has a true taste of life, to ease an aking heart, to see the humane countenance lighted up into smiles of joy, on the receipt of a bit of ore, which is superfluous, and otherwise useless in a man's own pocket? What could a man do better with his cash? This is the effect of an humane disposition, where there is only a general tie of nature, and common necessity. What then must it be, when we serve an object of merit, of admiration!

Ind. Well! the more you argue against it, the more I shall admire the generosity.

Bev. jun. Nay, nay—then, Madam, 'tis time to fly, after a declaration, that my opinion strengthens my adversary's argument—I had best hasten to my appointment with Mr. Myrtle, and be gone, while we are friends, and—before things are brought to an extremity —

[Exit carelessly.

Enter Isabella.

Isab. Well, Madam, what think you of him now, pray?

Ind. I protest, I begin to fear he is wholly disinterested, in what he does for me. On my heart, he has no other view, but the mere pleasure of doing it, and has neither good nor bad designs upon me.

Isab. Ah! dear niece! don't be in fear of both! I'll warrant you, you will know time enough, that he is not indifferent.

Ind.

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Ind. You please me, when you tell me so: for, he has any wishes towards me, I know he will not pursue them but with honour.

Ifab. I wish I were as confident of one as t'other, —I saw the respectful downcast of his eye, when you catch'd him gazing at you during the music: he, I warrant, was surpriz'd, as if he had been taken stealing your watch. O! the undissembled guilty look!

Ind. But did you observe any such thing, really? I thought he look'd most charmingly graceful! how engaging is modesty in a man, when one knows there's is a great mind within — so tender a confusion! and yet, in other respects, so much himself, so collected, so dauntless, so determined!

Ifab. Ah, niece! there is a sort of bashfulness, which is the best engine to carry on a shameless purpose: some men's modesty serves their wickedness, as hypocrisy gains the respect due to piety: but, I will own to you, there is one hopeful symptom, if there could be such a thing as a disinterested lover; but it's all a perplexity, till — till — till —

Ind. Till what?

Ifab. Till I know whether Mr. Myrtle and Mr. Bevil are really friends or foes — and that I will be convinced of before I sleep: for you shall not be deceiv'd.

Ind. I'm sure I never shall if your fears can guard me: in the mean time, I'll wrap myself up in the integrity of my own heart, nor dare to doubt of his.

*As conscious honour all his actions fleers:
So conscious innocence dispels my fears.*

[*Exeunt.*]

A C T

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ACT III. SCENE Sealand's House.

Enter Tom meeting Phillis.

Tom. **W**ELL, Phillis!—what, with a face as if you had never seen me before!—what a work have I to do now! she has seen some new visitant at their house, whose airs she has catch'd, and is resolv'd to practise them upon me. Numberless are the changes she'll dance thro', before she'll answer this plain question; *videlicet*, Have you deliver'd my master's letter to your lady? nay, I know her too well, to ask her an account of it in an ordinary way: I'll be in my airs as well as she. [*Aside.*—Well, Madam, as unhappy as you are at present pleased to make me, I would not, in the general, be any other than what I am: I would not be a bit wiser, a bit richer, a bit taller, a bit shorter, than I am at this instant.

[*Looking stedfastly at her.*

Phil. Did ever any body doubt, Master Thomas, but that you were extremely satisfied with your sweet self?

Tom. I am indeed—the thing I have least reason to be satisfied with is my fortune, and I am glad of my poverty: perhaps, if I were rich, I should overlook the finest woman in the world, that wants nothing but riches to be thought so.

Phil. How prettily was that said? but, I'll have a great deal more, before I'll say one word.

[*Aside.*

Tom. I should, perhaps, have been stupidly above her, had I not been her equal; and, by not being her equal, never had opportunity of being her slave. I am my master's servant, for hire; I am my mistress's, from choice, wou'd she but approve my passion.

Phil. I think, it's the first time I ever heard you speak of it, with any sense of the anguish, if you really do suffer any.

Tom.

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Tom. Ah, Phillis! can you doubt, after what you have seen?

Phil. I know not what I have seen, nor what I have heard; but, since I'm at leisure, you may tell me, when you fell in love with me; how you fell in love with me; and what you have suffer'd, or are ready to suffer for me.

Tom. O the unmerciful jade! when I'm in haste about my master's letter——But, I must go thro' it. [*Aside.*]——Ah! too well I remember when, and how, and on what occasion, I was first surpriz'd. It was on the first of April, one thousand seven hundred and fifteen, I came into Mr. Sealand's service: I was then a hobble-de-hoy, and you a pretty light tight girl, a favourite handmaid of the housekeeper.——At that time we neither of us knew what was in us: I remember I was order'd to get out of the window, one pair of stairs, to rub the sashes clean——the person employ'd, on the inner-side was your charming self, whom I had never seen before.

Phil. I think, I remember the silly accident: what made ye, you oaf, ready to fall down into the street?

Tom. You know not, I warrant you——you could not guess what surpriz'd me. You took no delight, when you immediately grew wanton in your conquest, and put your lips close, and breath'd upon the glass, and when my lips approach'd, a dirty cloth you rubb'd against my face, and hid your beauteous form; when I again drew near, you spit and rubb'd, and smil'd at my undoing.

Phil. What silly thoughts you men have!

Tom. We were Pyramus and Thisbe——but ten times harder was my fate: Pyramus could peep only through a wall; I saw her, saw my Thisbe in all her beauty, but as much kept from her as if a hundred walls between; for there was more, there was her will against me——would she but yet relent!——O Phillis! Phillis! shorten my torment, and declare you pity me.

Phil.

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Phil. I believe it's very sufferable: the pain is not so exquisite, but that you may bear it a little longer.

Tom. O my charming Phillis, if all depended on my fair one's will, I could with glory suffer—but, dearest creature, consider our miserable state.

Phil. How! miserable!

Tom. We are miserable to be in love, and under the command of others than those we love—with that generous passion in the heart, to be sent to and fro on errands, call'd, check'd and rated for the meanest trifles. O Phillis! you don't know how many China cups and glasses my passion for you has made me break: you have broke my fortune, as well as my heart.

Phil. Well, Mr. Thomas, I cannot but own to you, that I believe your master writes and you speak the best of any men in the world. Never was woman so well pleas'd with a letter, as my young lady was with his, and this is an answer to it.

[Gives him a letter.]

Tom. This was well done, my dearest; consider, we must strike out some pretty livelihood for ourselves, by closing their affairs: it will be nothing for them to give us a little being of our own, some small tenement, out of their large possessions: whatever they give us, 'twill be more than what they keep for themselves: one acre, with Phillis, wou'd be worth a whole county without her.

Phil. Oh, could I but believe you!

Tom. If not the utterance, believe the touch of my lips.

[Kisses her.]

Phil. There's no contradicting you: how closely you argue, Tom!

Tom. And will closer in due time. But I must hasten with this letter, to hasten towards the possession of you.—Then, Phillis, consider, how I must be reveng'd, look to it, of all your skittishness, shy looks, and at best but coy compliances.

Phil. O Tom! you grow wanton and sensual, as
my

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my lady calls it, I must not endure it: Oh, foh! you are a man, an odious filthy male creature: you should behave, if you had a right sense, or were a man of sense, like Mr. Cimberton, with distance and indifference; 'or let me see some other becoming hard word, with seeming in-in-advertency;' and not rush on one as if you were seizing a prey. But, hush——the ladies are coming——good Tom, don't kiss me above once, and be gone——lard, we have been fooling and toying, and not consider'd the main business of our masters and mistresses.

Tom. Why, their business is to be fooling and toying, as soon as the parchments are ready.

Phil. Well remember'd——parchments——my lady, to my knowledge, is preparing writings between her coxcomb cousin, Cimberton, and my mistress; though my master has an eye to the parchments already prepar'd between your master, Mr. Bevil, and my mistress; and I believe, my mistress herself has sign'd and seal'd, in her heart, to Mr. Myrtle.——Did I not bid you kiss me but once and be gone, but I know you won't be satisfy'd.

Tom. No, you smooth creature, how should I! *[Kissing her hand.]*

Phil. Well, since you are so humble, or so cool, as to ravish my hand only, I'll take my leave of you like a great lady, and you a man of quality.

[They salute formally.]

Tom. Pox of all this state.

[Offers to kiss her more closely.]

Phil. No, pr'ythee, Tom, mind your business.
 • We must follow that interest which will take;
 • but endeavour at that which will be most for us,
 • and we like most'——O here's my young mistress! *[Tom taps her neck behind, and kisses his fingers.]*
 Go, you liquorish fool!

Enter Lucinda.

Luc. Who was that you was hurrying away?

Phil. One that I had no mind to part with.

Luc. Why did you turn him away then?

Phil.

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Phil. For your ladyship's service, to carry your ladyship's letter to his master: I could hardly get the rogue away.

Luc. Why, has he so little love for his master?

Phil. No; but he has so much love for his mistress.

Luc. But, I thought I heard him kiss you. Why do you suffer that?

Phil. Why, Madam, we vulgar take it to be a sign of love: we servants, we poor people, that have nothing but our persons to bestow or treat for, 'are
' forc'd to deal and bargain by way of sample; and
' therefore, as we have no parchments or wax necessary in our agreements, we' squeeze with our hands, and seal with our lips, to ratifie vows and promises.

Luc. But can't you trust one another without such earnest down?

Phil. We don't think it safe, any more than you gentry, to come together without deeds executed.

Luc. Thou art a pert merry huffy.

Phil. I wish, Madam, your lover and you were as happy as Tom and your servant are.

Luc. You grow impertinent.

Phil. I have done, Madam: and I won't ask you what you intend to do with Mr. Myrtle, what your father will do with Mr. Bevil, nor what you all, especially my lady, mean by admitting Mr. Cimberton as particularly here, as if he were married to you already; nay, you are married actually as far as people of quality are.

Luc. How's that?

Phil. You have different beds in the same house.

Luc. Pshaw! I have a very great value for Mr. Bevil, but have absolutely put an end to his pretensions, in the letter I gave you for him: 'but, my father,
' in his heart, still has a mind to him, were it not for
' this woman they talk of; and, I am apt to imagine,
' he is married to her, or never designs to marry at all.'

Phil.

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Phil. Then Mr. Myrtle ———

Luc. He had my parents leave to apply to me, and by that has won me and my affections: who is to have this body of mine without 'em, it seems is nothing to me: my mother says, it's indecent for me to let my thoughts stray about the person of my husband: nay, she says, a maid, rigidly virtuous, tho' she may have been where her lover was a thousand times, should not have made observations enough to know him from another man, when she sees him in a third place.

Phil. That is more than the severity of a nun: for not to see, when one may, is hardly possible; not to see when one can't, is very easy: at this rate, Madam, there are a great many whom you have not seen, who ———

Luc. Mamma says the first time you see your husband should be at that instant he is made so; when your father, with the help of the minister, gives you to him: then you are to see him, then you are to observe and take notice of him, because then you are to obey him.

Phil. But does not my lady remember you are to love as well as obey?

Luc. To love is a passion, 'tis a desire, and we must have no desires. Oh! I cannot endure the reflection! with what insensibility on my part, with what more than patience have I been expos'd, and offer'd to some awkward booby or other, in every county of Great-Britain?

Phil. Indeed, Madam, I wonder I never heard you speak of it before with this indignation.

Luc. Every corner of the land has presented me with a wealthy coxcomb. As fast as one treaty has gone off, another has come on, till my name and person have been the tittle tattle of the whole town: What is this world come to! No shame left! To be barter'd for, like the beasts of the fields, and that, in such an instance, as coming together, to an intire familiarity, and union of soul and body;
Oh!

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Oh! and this, without being so much as well-wishers to each other, but for encrease of fortune.'

Phil. But, Madam, all these vexations will end very soon, in one for all: Mr. Cimberton is your mother's kinsman, and three hundred years an older gentleman than any lover you ever had; for which reason, with that of his prodigious large estate, she is resolved on him, and has sent to consult the lawyers accordingly. Nay, has (whether you know it or not) been in treaty with Sir Geoffry, who, to join in the settlement, has accepted of a sum to do it, and is every moment expected in town for that purpose.

Luc. How do you get all this intelligence?

Phil. By an art I have, I thank my stars, beyond all the waiting-maids in Great Britain: the art of list'ning, Madam, for your ladyship's service.

Luc. I shall soon know as much as you do: leave me, leave me, Phillis, be gone: here, here, I'll turn you out. My mother says I must not converse with my servants; tho' I must converse with no one else. [*Exit Phillis.*] 'How unhappy are we, who are born to great fortunes! No one looks at us with indifference, or acts towards us on the foot of plain dealing; yet, by all I have been heretofore offer'd to, or treated for, I have been us'd with the most agreeable of all abuses, flattery; but now, by this flegmatic fool, I am us'd as nothing, or a mere thing; he, forsooth! is too wise, too learned, to have any regard to desires, and, I know not what the learned oaf calls sentiments of love and passion——' Here he comes with my mother—— It's much if he looks at me; or, if he does, takes no more notice of me, than of any other moveable in the room.

Enter Mrs. Sealand and Mr. Cimberton.

Mrs. Seal. How do I admire this noble, this learned taste of yours, and the worthy regard you have to our own ancient and honourable house, in consulting a means, to keep the blood as pure, and as regularly descended as may be!

Cim.

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Cim. Why, really, Madam, the young women of this age are treated with discourses of such a tendency, and their imaginations so bewilder'd in flesh and blood, that a man of reason can't talk to be understood: they have no ideas of happiness, but what are more gross than the gratification of hunger and thirst.

Luc. With how much reflection he is a coxcomb!

[*Aside.*

Cim. And in truth, Madam, I have consider'd it as a most brutal custom, that persons, of the first character in the world, should go as ordinarily, and with as little shame, to bed, as to dinner with one another. They proceed to the propagation of the species, as openly, as to the preservation of the individual.

Luc. She that willingly goes to bed to thee, must have no shame, I'm sure!

[*Aside.*

Mrs. Seal. O cousin Cimberton! cousin Cimberton! how abstracted, how refined, is your sense of things! But, indeed, it is too true, there is nothing so ordinary as to say, in the best-govern'd families, my master and lady are gone to bed: one does not know but it might have been said of one's self.

[*Hiding her face with her fan.*

Cim. Lycurgus, Madam, instituted otherwise: among the Lacedemonians, the whole female world was pregnant, but none, but the mothers themselves, knew by whom: their meetings were secret, and the amorous congress always by stealth; and no such professed doings between the sexes, as are tolerated among us, under the audacious word, marriage.

Mrs. Seal. Oh! had I liv'd in those days, and been a matron of Sparta, one might, with less indecency, have had ten children, according to that modest institution, than one under the confusion of our modern, barefac'd manner.

Luc. And yet, poor woman, she has gone thro' the whole ceremony, and here I stand a melancholy proof of it.

[*Aside.*

Mrs.

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Mrs. Seal. We will talk then of business. That girl walking about the room there is to be your wife. She has, I confess, no ideas, no sentiments, that speak her born of a thinking mother.

Cimb. I have observ'd her: her lively look, free air, and disengag'd countenance, speak her very——

Luc. Very, what?

Cimb. If you please, Madam — to set her a little that way.

Mrs. Seal. Lucinda, say nothing to him, you are not a match for him: when you are married, you may speak to such a husband, when ye're spoken to. But, I am disposing of you, above yourself, every way.

Cimb. Madam, you cannot but observe the inconveniences I expose myself to, in hopes that your ladyship will be the consort of my better part: As for the young woman, she is rather an impediment, than a help, to a man of letters and speculation. Madam, there is no reflection, no philosophy, can, at all times, subdue the sensitive life, but the animal shall sometimes carry away the man: Ha! ay, the vermillion of her lips.

Luc. Pray, don't talk of me thus.

Cimb. The pretty enough—pant of her bosom.

Luc. Sir! Madam, don't you hear him?

Cimb. Her forward chest.

Luc. Intolerable!

Cimb. High health.

Luc. The grave, easy impudence of him!

Cimb. Proud heart.

Luc. Stupid coxcomb!

Cimb. I say, Madam, her impatience, while we are looking at her, throws out all attractions—her arms—her neck—what a spring in her step!

Luc. Don't you run me over thus, you strange unaccountable!

Cimb. What an elasticity in her veins and arteries!

Luc. I have no veins, no arteries.

Mrs.

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Mrs. Seal. O child, hear him, he talks finely, he's a scholar, he knows what you have.

Cimb. The speaking invitation of her shape, the gathering of herself up, and the indignation you see in the pretty little thing — now, I am considering her, on this occasion, but as one that is to be pregnant.——

Luc. The familiar, learned, unseasonable puppy!
[*Aside.*

Cimb. And pregnant undoubtedly she will be yearly. I fear, I shan't, for many years, have discretion enough to give her one fallow season.

Luc. Monster! there's no bearing it. The hideous sot! — there's no enduring it, to be thus survey'd like a steed at sale.

Cimb. At sale! she's very illiterate — But she's very well limb'd too: turn her in; I see what she is.

[*Exit Lucinda in a rage.*

Mrs. Seal. Go, you creature! I am ashamed of you!

Cimb. No harm done — you know, Madam, the better sort of people, as I observ'd to you, treat by their lawyers of weddings [*adjusting himself at the glass*] and the woman in the bargain, like the mansion-house in the sale of the estate, is thrown in, and what that is, whether good or bad, is not at all consider'd.

Mrs. Seal. I grant it, and therefore make no demand for her youth, and beauty, and every other accomplishment, as the common world think 'em, because she is not polite.

Cimb. 'Madam, I know, your exalted understanding, abstracted, as it is, from vulgar prejudices, will not be offended, when I declare to you,' I marry to have an heir to my estate, and not to beget a colony, or a plantation: this young woman's beauty, and constitution, will demand provision for a tenth child at least.

Mrs. Seal. With all that wit, and learning, how confederate! What an oeconomist! [*aside.*] — Sir,
I cannot

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‘ I cannot make her any other than she is ; or say she
‘ is much better than the other young women of this
‘ age, or fit for much, besides being a mother ; but
‘ I have given directions for the marriage settle-
‘ ments, and Sir Geoffry Cimberton’s council is
‘ to meet ours here, at this hour, concerning his
‘ joining in the deed, which, when executed, makes
‘ you capable of settling what is due to Lucinda’s
‘ fortune : herself, as I told you, I say nothing of.

‘ *Cimb.* No, no, no, indeed, Madam, it is not
‘ usual ;’ and I must depend upon my own reflec-
‘ tion and philosophy not to overstock my family.

‘ *Mrs. Seal.* I cannot help her, cousin Cimberton ;
but she is, for aught I see, as well as the daughter of
any body else.

Cimb. That is very true, Madam.

Enter a servant, who whispers Mrs. Seal.

‘ *Mrs. Seal.* The lawyers are come, ‘ and now we
‘ are to hear what they have resolv’d as to the point
‘ whether it’s necessary that Sir Geoffry should join
‘ in the settlement, as being what they call in the
‘ remainder.’ But, good cousin, you must have pa-
‘ tience with ’em. These lawyers, I am told, are of
‘ a different kind : one is what they call a chamber-
‘ council, the other a pleader : the conveyancer is slow,
‘ from an imperfection in his speech, and therefore
‘ shun’d the bar, but extremely passionate, and impa-
‘ tient of contradiction : the other is as warm as he ;
‘ but has a tongue so voluble, and a head so conceited,
‘ he will suffer no body to speak but himself.

‘ *Cimb.* You mean old serjeant Target, and coun-
‘ sellor Bramble ? I have heard of ’em.

‘ *Mrs. Seal.* The same : shew in the gentlemen.

[Exit Servant.]

‘ *Re-enter Servant, introducing Myrtle and Tom, dis-
‘ guised as Bramble and Target.*

‘ *Mrs. Seal.* Gentlemen, this is the party concern’d,
‘ Mr. Cimberton ; and I hope you have consider’d of
‘ the matter.

C

Tar.

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Tar. Yes, Madam, we have agreed that it must be by Indent—dent—dent—dent—

Bram. Yes, Madam, Mr. Serjeant and myself have agreed, as he is pleas'd to inform you, that it must be an indenture tripartite, and tripartite let it be, for Sir Geoffry must needs be a party; old Cimberton, in the year 1619, says, in that ancient roll; in Mr. Serjeant's hands, as recourse thereto being had, will more at large appear—

Tar. Yes, and by the deeds in your hands, it appears, that—

Bram. Mr. Serjeant, I beg of you to make no inferences upon what is in our custody; but speak to the titles in your own deeds—I shall not show that deed till my client is in town.

Cimb. You know best your own methods.

Mrs. Seal. The single question is, whether the entail is such, that my cousin Sir Geoffry is necessary in this affair?

Bram. Yes, as to the lordship of Tretriplet, but not as to the messuage of Gringribber.

Tar. I say that Gr—gr— that Gr—gr— Gringribber, Gringribber is in us. That is to say the remainder thereof, as well as that of Tr—tr—Triplet.

Bram. You go upon the deed of Sir Ralph, made in the middle of the last century, precedent to that in which old Cimberton made over the remainder, and made it pass to the heirs general, by which your client comes in; and I question whether the remainder even of Tretriplet is in him—But we are willing to wave that, and give him a valuable consideration. But we shall not purchase what is in us for ever, as Gringribber is, at the rate as we guard against the contingent of Mr. Cimberton having no son—Then we know Sir Geoffry is the first of the collateral male line in this family—Yet—

Tar. Sir, Gr—gr—ber is—

Bram. I apprehend you very well, and your argument might be of force, and we would be inclin'd to hear

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hear that in all its parts—But, Sir, I see very plainly what you are going into—I tell you, it is as probable a contingent that Sir Geoffry may die before Mr. Cimberton, as that he may outlive him.

Tar. Sir, we are not ripe for that yet, but I must say—

Bram. Sir, I allow you the whole extent of that argument; but that will go no farther than as to the claimants under old Cimberton—I am of opinion, that, according to the instruction of Sir Ralph, he could not dock the entail, and then create a new estate for the heirs general.

Tar. Sir, I have not patience to be told that, when Gr—gr—ber—

Bram. I will allow it you, Mr. Serjeant; but there must be the word *heirs for ever*, to make such an estate as you pretend.

Cimb. I must be impartial, tho' you are council for my side of the question—Were it not that you are so good as to allow him what he has not said, I should think it very hard you should answer him without hearing him—But, gentlemen, I believe you have both consider'd this matter, and are firm in your different opinions: 'twere better therefore you proceeded according to the particular sense of each of you, and gave your thoughts distinctly in writing—And do you see, Sirs, pray let me have a copy of what you say, in English.

Bram. Why, what is all we have been saying?—In English! Oh! but I forgot myself, you're a wit—But however, to please you, Sir, you shall have it, in as plain terms, as the law will admit of.

Cimb. But I would have it, Sir, without delay.

Bram. That, Sir, the law will not admit of: the Courts are sitting at Westminster, and I am this moment oblig'd to be at every one of them, and 'twould be wrong if I should not be in the Hall to attend one of 'em at least, the rest would take it ill else—Therefore, I must leave what I have said to Mr. Serjeant's consideration, and I will digest his arguments

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ments on my part, and you shall hear from me again, Sir. [Exit Bramble.]

Tar. Agreed, agreed.

Cimb. Mr. Bramble is very quick—He parted a little abruptly.

Tar. He could not bear my argument, I pincht him to the quick about that Gr—gr—ber.

Mrs. Seal. I saw that, for he durst not so much as hear you—I shall send to you, Mr. Serjeant, as soon as Sir Geoffry comes to town, and then I hope all may be adjusted.

Tar. I shall be at my chambers, at my usual hours.

[Exit.]

Cimb. Madam, if you please, I'll now attend to the tea-table, where I shall hear from your ladyship reason and good-sense, after all this law and gibberish,

Mrs. Seal. 'Tis a wonderful thing, Sir, that men of their profession do not study to talk the substance of what they have to say, in the language of the rest of the world: sure, they'd find their account in it.

Cimb. They might, perhaps, Madam, with people of your good-sense; but, with the generality, 'twould never do: the vulgar would have no respect for truth and knowledge, if they were exposed to naked view.

Truth is too simple, of all art bereav'd:

Since the world will—why let it be deceiv'd.

[Exit.]

ACT IV. SCENE Bevil junior's Lodgings.

Bevil junior with a letter in his hand, follow'd by Tom.

Tom. UPON my life, Sir, I knew nothing of the matter: I never open'd my lips to Mr. Myrtle about any thing of your Honour's letter to Madam Lucinda.

Bev.

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Bev. What's the fool in such a fright for? I don't suppose you did: What I would know is, whether Mr. Myrtle shew'd any suspicion, or ask'd you any questions, to lead you to say casually, that you had carry'd any such letter for me this morning.

Tom. Why, Sir, if he did ask me any questions, how could I help it?

Bev. I don't say you could, oaf! I am not questioning you, but him: what did he say to you?

Tom. Why, Sir, when I came to his chambers, to be dress'd for the lawyer's part, your Honour was pleas'd to put me upon, he ask'd me, if I had been at Mr. Sealand's this morning? — So I told him, Sir, I often went thither—because, Sir, if I had not said that, he might have thought there was something more in my going now, than at another time.

Bev. Very well!—The fellow's caution, I find, has given him this jealousy. [*Aside.*] Did he ask you no other questions?

Tom. Yes, Sir—now I remember, as we came away in the hackney coach, from Mr. Sealand's, Tom, says he, as I came in to your master, this morning, he bad you go for an answer to a letter he had sent. Pray did you bring him any? says he—Ah! says I, Sir, your Honour is pleas'd to joke with me, you have a mind to know whether I can keep a secret, or no?

Bev. And so, by shewing him you could, you told him you had one?

Tom. Sir—— [*Confus'd.*]

Bev. What mean actions does jealousy make a man stoop to? How poorly has he us'd art, with a servant, to make him betray his own master? Well! and when did he give you this letter for me?

Tom. Sir, he writ it before he pull'd off his lawyer's gown, at his own chambers.

Bev. Very well: and what did he say, when you brought him my answer to it?

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Tom. He look'd a little out of humour, Sir, and said, it was very well.

Bev. I knew he would be grave upon't——wait without.

Tom. Humph! 'gad, I don't like this; I am afraid we are all in the wrong box here.— [Exit Tom.

Bev. I put on a serenity, while my fellow was present: But I have never been more thoroughly disturb'd; this hot man! to write me a challenge, on supposed artificial dealing, when I profess'd myself his friend! I can live contented without glory, but I cannot suffer shame. What's to be done? But first, let me consider Lucinda's letter again. [Reads.

SIR,

I hope it is consistent with the laws a woman ought to impose upon herself, to acknowledge, that your manner of declining a treaty of marriage in our family, and desiring the refusal may come from me, has something more engaging in it, than the courtship of him, who, I fear, will fall to my lot, except your friend exerts himself for our common safety and happiness. I have reasons for desiring Mr. Myrtle may not know of this letter, till hereafter, and am your most oblig'd humble servant,

Lucinda Sealand.

Well, but the postscript. [Reads.

I won't, upon second thoughts, hide any thing from you. But my reason for concealing this is, that Mr. Myrtle has a jealousy in his temper, which gives me some terrors; but my esteem for him inclines me to hope that only an ill effect, which sometimes accompanies a tender love, and what may be cur'd by a careful and unblameable conduct.

Thus has this lady made me her friend and confident, and put herself, in a kind, under my protection: I cannot tell him immediately the purport of her letter, except I could cure him of the violent and untractable passion of jealousy, and so serve him and her, by disobeying her, in the article of secrecy, more than I should by complying with her directions——But then this duelling, which custom has impos'd

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pos'd upon every man, who would live with reputation and honour in the world—How must I preserve myself from imputations there? He'll, forsooth, call it, or think it fear, if I explain myself without fighting—But this letter—I'll read it again.—

SIR,

You have us'd me basely, in corresponding, and carrying on a treaty, where you told me you were indifferent: I have chang'd my sword since I saw you; which advertisement I thought proper to send you against the next meeting between you, and the injur'd

Charles Myrtle.

Enter Tom.

Tom. Mr. Myrtle, Sir: would your Honour please to see him?

Bew. Why, you stupid creature! let Mr. Myrtle wait at my lodgings! Shew him up. [*Exit Tom.*]

Well! I am resolv'd upon my carriage to him—He is in love, and in every circumstance of life a little disruffful, which I must allow for—but here he is. [*Enter Tom introducing Myrtle.*] Sir, I am extremely oblig'd to you for this honour—but, Sir, you, with your very discerning face, leave the room. [*Exit Tom.*] Well, Mr. Myrtle, your commands with me?

Myrt. The time, the place, our long acquaintance, and many other circumstances, which affect me on this occasion, oblige me, without farther ceremony or conference, to desire you would not only, as you already have, acknowledge the receipt of my letter, but also comply with the request in it. I must have farther notice taken of my message than these half lines—I have yours—I shall be at home.—

Bew. Sir, I own I have received a letter from you, in a very unusual style; but as I design every thing in this matter, shall be your own action, your own seeking, I shall understand nothing, but what you are pleas'd to confirm, face to face, and I have already forgot the contents of your epistle.

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Myrt. This cool manner is very agreeable to the abuse you have already made of my simplicity and frankness; and I see your moderation tends to your own advantage, and not mine; to your own safety, not consideration of your friend.

Bev. My own safety, Mr. Myrtle!

Myrt. Your own safety, Mr. Bevil.

Bev. Look you, Mr. Myrtle, there's no disguising that I understand what you would be at—But, Sir, you know, I have often dared to disapprove of the decisions that tyrant, Custom, has introduc'd, to the breach of all laws both divine and human.

Myrt. Mr. Bevil, Mr. Bevil, it would be a good first principle, in those who have so tender a conscience that way, to have as much abhorrence of doing injuries, as—

Bev. As what?

Myrt. As fear of answering for 'em.

Bev. As fear of answering for 'em! But that apprehension is just or blameable, according to the object of that fear—I have often told you in confidence of heart, I abhor'd the daring to offend the Author of life, and rushing into his presence—I say, by the very same act, to commit the crime against him, and immediately to urge on to his tribunal.

Myrt. Mr. Myrtle, I must tell you, this coolness, this gravity, this shew of conscience, shall never cheat me of my mistress. You have, indeed, the best excuse for life, the hopes of possessing Lucinda; but consider, Sir, I have as much reason to be weary of it; if I am to lose her; and my first attempt to recover her, shall be to let her see the dauntless man, who is to be her guardian and protector.

Bev. Sir, shew me but the least glimpse of argument, that I am authoriz'd, by my own hand, to vindicate any lawless insult of this nature, and I will shew thee—to chastize thee—hardly deserves the name of courage—flight, inconsiderate man!—There is, Mr. Myrtle, no such terror in quick anger; and you shall,

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shall, you know not why, be cool, as you have, you know not why, been warm.

Myrt. Is the woman one loves so little an occasion of anger? You perhaps, who know not what it is to love, who have your ready, your commodious, your foreign trinket, for your loose hours; and from your fortune, your specious outward carriage, and other lucky circumstances, as easy a way to the possession of a woman of honour: you know nothing of what it is to be alarm'd, to be distracted, with anxiety and terror of losing more than life: your marriage, happy man! goes on like common business, and in the interim, you have your rambling captive, your Indian princess, for your soft moments of dalliance, your convenient, your ready Indiana.

Bev. You have touch'd me beyond the patience of a man; and I'm excusable, in the guard of innocence (or from the infirmity of human nature, which can bear no more) to accept your invitation, and observe your letter——Sir, I'll attend you.

Enter Tom.

Tom. Did you call, Sir? I thought you did: I heard you speak loud.

Bev. Yes, go call a coach.

Tom. Sir——Master——Mr. Myrtle——Friends——Gentlemen——what d'ye mean? I am but a servant, or——

Bev. Call a coach: [*Exit Tom.*] [*A long pause, walking sullenly by each other.*] [*Aside.*] Shall I (though provok'd to the uttermost) recover myself at the entrance of a third person, and that my servant too, and not have respect enough to all I have ever been receiving from infancy, the obligation to the best of fathers, to an unhappy virgin too, whose life depends on mine. [*Shutting the door.*] [*To Myrtle.*] I have, thank Heaven, had time to recollect myself, and shall not, for fear of what such a rash man as you think of me, keep longer unexplain'd the false appearances, under which your infir-

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mity of temper makes you suffer; when, perhaps, too much regard to a false point of honour makes me prolong that suffering.

Myrt. I am sure Mr. Bevil cannot doubt but I had rather have satisfaction from his innocence, than his sword.

Bev. Why then would you ask it first that way?

Myrt. Consider, you kept your temper yourself no longer than till I spoke to the disadvantage of her you lov'd.

Bev. True. But let me tell you, I have sav'd you from the most exquisite distress, even tho' you had succeeded in the dispute: I know you so well, that I am sure, to have found this letter about a man you had kill'd, would have been worse than death to yourself—Read it—When he is thoroughly mortify'd, and shame has got the better of jealousy, when he has seen himself thoroughly, he will deserve to be assisted towards obtaining Lucinda.

Myrt. With what a superiority has he turn'd the injury on me, as the aggressor! I begin to fear, I have been too far transported—*A treaty in our family!* is not that saying too much? I shall relapse—But I find (on the postscript) *something like jealousy*—with what face can I see my benefactor! my advocate! whom I have treated like a betrayer.——O Bevil! with what words shall I——

Bev. There needs none: to convince is much more than to conquer.

Myrt. But can you——

Bev. You have o'erpaid the inquietude you gave me, in the change I see in you towards me: alas! what machines are we! thy face is alter'd to that of another man; to that of my companion, my friend.

Myrt. That I could be such a precipitate wretch!

Bev. Pray, no more.

Myrt. Let me reflect how many friends have died by the hands of friends, for want of temper; and you must give me leave to say again, and again, how much

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much I am beholden to that superior spirit you have subdu'd me with—what had become of one of us, or perhaps both, had you been as weak as I was, and as incapable of reason?

Bev. I congratulate to us both the escape from ourselves, and hope the memory of it will make us dearer friends than ever.

Myrt. Dear Bevil, your friendly conduct has convinc'd me, that there is nothing manly, but what is conducted by reason, and agreeable to the practice of virtue and justice: And yet, how many have been sacrific'd to that idol, the unreasonable opinion of men! Nay, they are so ridiculous in it, that they often use their swords against each other, with dissembled anger, and real fear.

*Betray'd by honour, and compell'd by shame,
They hazard being, to preserve a name:
Not dare enquire into the dread mistake,
'Till plung'd in sad eternity they wake.* [Exeunt]

SCENE St. James's Park.

Enter Sir John Bevil, and Mr. Sealand.

Sir J. Bev. Give me leave, however, Mr. Sealand, as we are upon a treaty for uniting our families, to mention only the business of an ancient house—Genealogy and descent are to be of some consideration in an affair of this sort—

Mr. Seal. Genealogy, and descent!—Sir, there has been in our family a very large one. There was Galfrid the father of Edward, the father of Ptolemy, the father of Crassus, the father of Earl Richard, the father of Henry the marquis, the father of duke John—

Sir J. Bev. What, do you rave, Mr. Sealand? all these great names in your family?

Mr. Seal. These! yes, Sir—I have heard my father name 'em all, and more.

Sir J. Bev. Ay, Sir!—and did he say they were all in your family?

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Mr. Seal. Yes, Sir, he kept 'em all—he was the greatest cocker in England—he said, duke John won him many battles, and never lost one.

Sir J. Bev. Oh, Sir, your servant, you are laughing at my laying any stress upon descent—but I must tell you, Sir, I never knew any one, but he that wanted that advantage, turn it into ridicule.

Mr. Seal. And I never knew any one, who had many better advantages, put that into his account—But, Sir John, value yourself as you please upon your ancient house, I am to talk freely of every thing, you are pleas'd to put into your bill of rates, on this occasion—yet, Sir, I have made no objections to your son's family—'Tis his morals, that I doubt.

Sir J. Bev. Sir, I can't help saying, that what might injure a citizen's credit, may be no stain to a gentleman's honour.

Mr. Seal. Sir John, the honour of a gentleman is liable to be tainted by as small a matter as the credit of a trader: we are talking of a marriage, and in such a case, the father of a young woman will not think it an addition to the honour or credit of her lover—that he is a keeper—

Sir J. Bev. Mr. Sealand, do not take upon you to spoil my son's marriage with any woman else.

Mr. Seal. Sir John, let him apply to any woman else, and have as many mistresses as he pleases—

Sir J. Bev. My son, Sir, is a discreet and sober gentleman—

Mr. Seal. Sir, I never saw a man that wench'd soberly and discreetly, that ever left it off—the decency observ'd in the practice hides, even from the sinner, the iniquity of it. They pursue it, not that their appetites hurry 'em away; but I warrant you, because 'tis their opinion they may do it.

Sir J. Bev. Were what you suspect a truth—do you design to keep your daughter a virgin, 'till you find a man unblemish'd that way?

Mr.

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Mr. Seal. Sir, as much a cit as you take me for—I know the town and the world—and give me leave to say, that we merchants are a species of gentry, that have grown into the world this last century, and are as honourable, and almost as useful, as you landed folks, that have always thought yourselves so much above us; for your trading, forsooth! is extended no farther than a load of hay, or a fat ox—You are pleasant people, indeed! because you are generally bred up to be lazy, therefore, I warrant you, industry is dishonourable.

Sir J. Bev. Be not offended, Sir: let us go back to our point.

Mr. Seal. Oh! not at all offended—but I don't love to leave any part of the account unclos'd—look you, Sir John, comparisons are odious, and more particularly so on occasions of this kind, when we are projecting races, that are to be made out of both sides of the comparisons.

Sir J. Bev. But my son, Sir, is, in the eye of the world, a gentleman of merit.

Mr. Seal. I own to you, I think him so.—But, Sir John, I am a man exercis'd and experienc'd in chances and disasters: I lost, in my earlier years, a very fine wife, and with her a poor little infant: this makes me, perhaps, over cautious to preserve the second bounty of Providence to me, and be as careful, as I can, of this child—you'll pardon me, my poor girl, Sir, is as valuable to me, as your boasted son to you.

Sir J. Bev. Why, that's one very good reason, Mr. Sealand, why I wish my son had her.

Mr. Seal. There is nothing but this strange lady here, this *incognita*, that can be objected to him—here and there a man falls in love with an artful creature, and gives up all the motives of life to that one passion.

Sir J. Bev. A man of my son's understanding cannot be supposed to be one of them.

Mr. Seal. Very wise men have been so enslav'd:
and

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and when a man marries with one of them upon his hands, whether mov'd from the demand of the world, or slighter reasons; such a husband soils with his wife for a month perhaps—then good b'w'y', Madam—the show's over—ah! John Dryden points out such a husband to a hair, where he says,

And while abroad so prodigal the dolt is;

Poor spouse at home as ragged as a colt is.

Now in plain terms, Sir, I shall not care to have my poor girl turn'd a grazing, and that must be the case, when

Sir J. Bev. But pray, consider, Sir, my son—

Mr. Seal. Look you, Sir, I'll make the matter short: this unknown lady, as I told you, is all the objection I have to him: but one way or other, he is, or has been, certainly engag'd to her—I am therefore resolv'd, this very afternoon, to visit her: now from her behaviour, or appearance, I shall soon be let into what I may fear, or hope for.

Sir J. Bev. Sir, I am very confident there can be nothing enquir'd into, relating to my son, that will not, upon being understood, turn to his advantage.

Mr. Seal. I hope that, as sincerely as you believe it——Sir John Bevil, when I am satisfied, in this great point, if your son's conduct answers the character you give him, I shall with your alliance more than that of any gentleman in Great Britain, and so your servant. [Exit.]

Sir J. Bev. He is gone in a way but barely civil; but his great wealth, and the merit of his only child, the heiress of it, are not to be lost for a little peevishness— [Enter Humphrey.] 'Oh! Humphrey, you are come in a seasonable minute: I want to talk to thee, and to tell thee, that my head and heart are on the rack about my son.

Humph. Sir, you may trust his discretion, I am sure you may.

Sir J. Bev. Why, I do believe I may, and yet I'm in a thousand fears, when I lay this vast wealth before

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before me: When I consider his prepossessions, either generous, to a folly, in an honourable love; or abandon'd, past redemption, in a vicious one; and, from the one or the other, his insensibility to the fairest prospect towards doubling our estate: a father, who knows how useful wealth is, and how necessary, even to those who despise it: I say a father, Humphrey, a father cannot bear it!

Humph. Be not transported, Sir: you will grow incapable of taking any resolution in your perplexity.

Sir J. Bev. Yet, as angry as I am with him, I would not have him surpriz'd in any thing—— This mercantile rough man may go grossly into the examination of this matter, and talk to the gentlewoman so as to——

Humph. No, I hope, not in an abrupt manner.

Sir J. Bev. No, I hope not! Why, dost thou know any thing of her, or of him, or of any thing of it, or all of it?

Humph. My dear master, I know so much; that I told him this very day, you had reason to be secretly out of humour about her.

Sir J. Bev. Did you go so far? Well, what said he to that?

Humph. His words were, (looking upon me stedfastly) Humphrey, says he, that woman is a woman of honour.

Sir J. Bev. How! Do you think he is married to her, or designs to marry her?

Humph. I can say nothing to the latter——But he says, he can marry no one without your consent, while you are living.

Sir J. Bev. If he said so much, I know he scorns to break his word with me.

Humph. I am sure of that.

Sir J. Bev. You are sure of that——Well! that's some comfort——Then I have nothing to do but to see the bottom of this matter, during this present ruffle —— O Humphrey!——

Humph.

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Humph. You are not ill, I hope, Sir.

Sir J. Bev. Yes, a man is very ill that's in a very ill humour: To be a father, is to be in care for one, whom you oftener disoblige, than please, by that very care——Oh! that sons could know the duty to a father, before they themselves are fathers——But, perhaps, you'll say now, that I am one of the happiest fathers in the world; but, I assure you, that of the very happiest is not a condition to be envied.

Humph. Sir, your pain arises, not from the thing itself, but your particular sense of it——You are overfond, nay, give me leave to say, you are unjustly apprehensive from your fondness: My master Bevil never disoblig'd you, and he will, I know he will, do every thing you ought to expect.

Sir J. Bev. He won't take all this money with this girl——For aught I know, he will, forsooth, have so much moderation, as to think he ought not to force his liking for any consideration.

Humph. He is to marry her, not you; he is to live with her, not you, Sir.

Sir J. Bev. I know not what to think: But, I know, nothing can be more miserable than to be in this doubt.——Follow me: I must come to some resolution. [Exeunt.]

SCENE Bevil junior's lodgings.

Enter Tom and Phillis.

Tom. Well, Madam, if you must speak with Mr. Myrtle, you shall; he is now with my master in the library.

Phil. But you must leave me alone with him, for he can't make me a present, nor I so handsomely take any thing from him, before you: it would not be decent.

Tom. It will be very decent, indeed, for me to retire, and leave my mistress with another man.

Phil. He is a gentleman, and will treat one properly——

Tom.

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Tom. I believe so—but, however, I won't be far off, and therefore will venture to trust you: I'll call him to you. [Exit Tom.]

Phil. What a deal of pother and sputter here is between my mistress and Mr. Myrtle, from mere punctilio! I could any hour of the day get her to her lover, and would do it—but she, forsooth, will allow no plot to get him; but, if he can come to her, I know she would be glad of it: I must therefore do her an acceptable violence, and surprize her into his arms. I am sure I go by the best rule imaginable: If she were my maid, I should think her the best servant in the world for doing so by me.

Enter Myrtle and Tom.

O Sir! you and Mr. Bevil are fine gentlemen, to let a lady remain under such difficulties as my poor mistress, and no attempt to set her at liberty, or release her from the danger of being instantly married to Cimberton.

Myrt. Tom has been telling—but what is to be done?

Phil. What is to be done—when a man can't come at his mistress!—Why, can't you fire our house, or the next house to us, to make us run out and you take us?

Myrt. How, Mrs. Phillis—

Phil. Ay—let me see that rogue deny to fire a house, make a riot, or any other little thing, when there were no other way to come at me.

Tom. I am oblig'd to you, Madam.

Phil. Why, don't we hear every day of people's hanging themselves for love, and won't they venture the hazard of being hang'd for love?—Oh! were I a man—

Myrt. What manly thing would you have me undertake, according to your ladyship's notion of a man?

Phil. Only be at once, what, one time or other, you may be, and wish to be, or must be.

Myrt. Dear girl, talk plainly to me, and consider,

I,

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I, in my condition, can't be in very good humour—you say, to be at once what I must be.

Phil. Ay, ay—I mean no more than to be an old man; I saw you do it very well at the masquerade: In a word, old Sir Geoffrey Cimberton is every hour expected in town, to join in the deeds and settlements for marrying Mr. Cimberton—He is half blind, half lame, half deaf, half dumb; tho', as to his passions and desires, he is as warm and ridiculous as when in the heat of youth.

Tom. Come to the business, and don't keep the gentleman in suspense for the pleasure of being courted, as you serve me.

Phil. I saw you at the masquerade act such a one to perfection: go, and put on that very habit, and come to our house as Sir Geoffrey. There is not one there, but myself, knows his person: I was born in the parish where he is lord of the manor. I have seen him often and often at church in the country. Do not hesitate, but come thither: they will think you bring a certain security against Mr. Myrtle, and you bring Mr. Myrtle: leave the rest to me, I leave this with you, and expect—They don't, I told you, know you: they think you out of town, which you had as good be for ever, if you lose this opportunity. — I must be gone; I know I am wanted at home.

Myrt. My dear Phillis! [*Catches and kisses her, and gives her money.*]

Phil. O fie! my kisses are not my own: you have committed violence; but I'll carry 'em to the right owner. [*Tom kisses her.*] Come, see me down stairs, [*to Tom*] and leave the lover to think of his last game for the prize. [*Exeunt Tom and Phillis.*]

Myrt. I think I will instantly attempt this wild expedient—The extravagance of it will make me less suspected, and it will give me opportunity to assert my own right to Lucinda, without whom I cannot live; But I am so mortify'd at this conduct of mine towards poor Bevil; he must think meanly of

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of me ——— I know not how to re-assume myself, and be in spirit enough for such an adventure as this ——— Yet I must attempt it, if it be only to be near Lucinda, under her present perplexities: and sure ———

*The next delight to transport with the fair,
Is to relieve her in her hours of care.* [Exit.

ACT V. SCENE Sealand's House.

Enter Phillis, with lights, before Myrtle, disguis'd like old Sir Geoffry, supported by Mrs. Sealand, Lucinda, and Cimberton.

Mrs. Seal. NOW I have seen you thus far, Sir Geoffry, will you excuse me a moment, while I give my necessary orders for your accommodation? [Exit Mrs. Sealand.

Myrt. I have not seen you, cousin Cimberton, since you were ten years old: and as it is incumbent on you to keep up our name and family, I shall, upon very reasonable terms, join with you in a settlement to that purpose: tho' I must tell you, cousin, this is the first merchant that has married into our house.

Luc. Dence on 'em! am I a merchant, because my father is? [Abide.

Myrt. But is he directly a trader, at this time?

Cimb. There's no hiding the disgrace, Sir: he trades to all parts of the world.

Myrt. We never had one of our family before, who descended from persons that did any thing.

Cimb. Sir, since it is a girl that they have, I am, for the honour of my family, willing to take it in again; and to sink her into our name, and no harm done.

Myrt. 'Tis prudently and generously resolv'd — Is this the young thing?

Cimb.

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Cimb. Yes, Sir.

Phil. Good Madam, don't be out of humour, but let them run to the utmost of their extravagance—Hear them out.

Myrt. Can't I see her nearer? my eyes are but weak.

Phil. Beside, I am sure the uncle has something worth your notice. I'll take care to get off the young one, and leave you to observe what may be wrought out of the old one, for your good. [Exit.

Cimb. Madam, this old gentleman, your great uncle, desires to be introduced to you, and to see you nearer — approach, Sir.

Myrt. By your leave, young lady. [Puts on spectacles]—Cousin Cimberton! She has exactly that sort of neck, and bosom, for which my sister Gertrude was so much admired, in the year sixty-one, before the French dresses first discovered any thing in women, below the chin.

Luc. [Aside.] What a very odd situation am I in! Tho' I cannot but be diverted, at the extravagance of their humours, equally unsuitable to their age—Chin, quotha—I don't believe my passionate lover there knows whether I have one or not. Ha! ha!

Myrt. Madam, I would not willingly offend, but I have a better glass. [Pulls out a large one.]

Enter Phillis to Cimberton.

Phil. Sir, my lady desires to shew the apartment to you, that she intends for Sir Geoffrey.

Cimb. Well Sir! by that time you have sufficiently gazed, and sunned yourself in the beauties of my spouse there, I will wait on you again.

[Ex. Cimb. and Phil.]

Myrt. Were it not, Madam, that I might be troublesome, there is something of importance, tho' we are alone, which I would say more safe from being heard.

Luc. There is something in this old fellow me-thinks, that raises my curiosity.

Myrt. To be free, Madam, I as heartily condemn this

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this kinsman of mine, as you do, and am sorry to see so much beauty and merit devoted, by your parents, to so insensible a possessor.

Luc. Surprizing!—I hope then, Sir, you will not contribute to the wrong you are so generous as to pity, whatever may be the interest of your family.

Myr. This hand of mine shall never be employ'd to sign any thing, against your good and happiness.

Luc. I am sorry, Sir, it is not in my power to make you proper acknowledgments; but there is a gentleman in the world, whose gratitude will, I am sure, be worthy of the favour.

Myr. All the thanks I desire, Madam, are in your power to give.

Luc. Name them, and command them.

Myr. Only, Madam, that the first time you are alone with your lover, you will, with open arms, receive him.

Luc. As willingly as his heart could wish it.

Myrt. Thus then he claims your promise! O Lucinda!

Luc. O! a cheat! a cheat! a cheat!

Myr. Hush! 'tis I, 'tis I, your lover, Myrtle himself, Madam.

Luc. O bless me! what a rashness, and folly to surprize me so——But hush——my mother——

Enter Mrs. Sealand, Cimberton, and Phillis.

Mrs. Seal. How now! what's the matter?

Luc. O Madam! as soon as you left the room, my uncle fell into a sudden fit, and—and—so I cry'd out for help, to support him, and conduct him to his chamber.

Mrs. Seal. That was kindly done! Alas! Sir, how do you find yourself?

Myr. Never was taken in so odd a way in my life——pray lead me! Oh! I was talking here——(*pray carry me*) to my cousin Cimberton's young lady——

Mrs. Seal. [*Aside.*] My cousin Cimberton's young lady!

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lady! How zealous he is, even in his extremity, for the match! a right Cimberton. [*Cimberton and Lucinda lead him, as one in pain, &c.*]

Cimb. Pox! uncle, you will pull my ear off.

Luc. Pray, uncle! you will squeeze me to death.

Mrs. Seal. No matter, no matter——he knows not what he does. Come, Sir, shall I help you out?

Myrt. By no means: I'll trouble no body, but my young cousins here. [*They lead him off.*]

Phil. But pray, Madam, does your ladyship intend that Mr. Cimberton shall really marry my young mistress at last? I don't think he likes her.

Mrs. Seal. That's not material! men of his speculation are above desires——but be it as it may, now I have given old Sir Geoffry the trouble of coming up to sign and seal, with what countenance can I be off?

Phil. As well as with twenty others, Madam: it is the glory and honour of a great fortune to live in continual treaties, and still to break off: it looks great, Madam.

Mrs. Seal. True, Phillis——yet to return to our blood again into the Cimbertons is an honour not to be rejected——but were not you saying, that Sir John Bevil's creature Humphrey has been with Mr. Sealand?

Phil. Yes, Madam: I overheard them agree, that Mr. Sealand should go himself, and visit this unknown lady that Mr. Bevil is so great with; and if he found nothing there to fright him, that Mr. Bevil should still marry my young mistress.

Mrs. Seal. How! nay then he shall find she is my daughter, as well as his: I'll follow him this instant, and take the whole family along with me: the disputed power of disposing of my own daughter shall be at an end this very night——I'll live no longer in anxiety for a little huffey that hurts my appearance,

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‘ appearance, wherever I carry her, and for whose
‘ sake I seem to be not at all regarded, and that in
‘ the best of my days.

‘ *Phil.* Indeed, Madam, if she were married, your
‘ ladyship might very well be taken for Mr. Sea-
‘ land’s daughter.

‘ *Mrs. Seal.* Nay, when the chit has not been with
‘ me, I have heard the men say as much — I’ll no
‘ longer cut off the greatest pleasure of a woman’s
‘ life (the shining in assemblies) by her forward an-
‘ ticipation of the respect that’s due to her superior
‘ — she shall down to Cimberton Hall — she shall
‘ — she shall.

‘ *Phil.* I hope, Madam, I shall stay with your
‘ ladyship.

‘ *Mrs. Seal.* Thou shalt, Phillis, and I’ll place
‘ thee more about me. — But order chairs imme-
‘ diately — I’ll be gone this minute. [*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E *Charing-Cross.*

Enter Mr. Seal and Humphrey.

Mr. Seal. I am very glad, Mr. Humphrey, that
you agree with me, that it is for our common good
I should look thoroughly into this matter.

Humph. I am, indeed, of that opinion; for there
is no artifice, nothing concealed, in our family,
which ought in justice to be known: I need not de-
fire you, Sir, to treat the lady with care and re-
spect.

Mr. Seal. Master Humphrey — I shall not be rude,
tho’ I design to be a little abrupt, and come into the
matter at once, to see how she will bear, upon a
surprise.

Humph. That’s the door, Sir: I wish you success
‘ — [*While Humphrey speaks, Seal and consults his*
‘ *table-book*] I am less concern’d what happens there,
‘ because I hear Mr. Myrtle is as well lodg’d as old Sir
‘ Geoffry: so I am willing to let this gentleman em-
‘ ploy

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‘ ploy himself here, to give them time at home ;
 ‘ for I am sure, ’tis necessary, for the quiet of our fa-
 ‘ mily, Lucinda were disposed of, out of it, since
 ‘ Mr. Bevil’s inclination is so much otherwise en-
 ‘ gaged. [Exit.]

Mr. Seal. ‘ I think this is the door——[Knocks]’
 I’ll carry this matter with an air of authority, to en-
 quire, tho’ I make an errand, to begin discourse.
 [Knocks again, and enter a Foot-boy.] So young man !
 is your lady within ?

Boy. Alack, Sir ! I am but a country boy——I
 dant know, whether she is, or noa : but an you’ll
 stay a bit, I’ll goa, and ask the gentlewoman that’s
 with her.

Mrs. Seal. Why, firrah, tho’ you are a country
 boy, you can see, can’t you ? you know whether she
 is at home, when you see her, don’t you ?

Boy. Nay, nay, I am not such a country lad nei-
 ther, master, to think she’s at home, because I see
 her : I have been in town but a month, and I lost one
 place already, for believing my own eyes.

Mr. Seal. Why, firrah ! have you learnt to lie al-
 ready ?

Boy. Ay ! master ! things that are lies in the
 country, are not lies at London —— I begin to know
 my business a little better than so —— but an you
 please to walk in, I’ll call a gentlewoman to you,
 that can tell you for certain——she can make bold to
 ask my lady herself.

Mr. Seal. O ! then, she is within I find, tho’ you
 dare not say so.

Boy. Nay, nay ! that’s neither here, nor there :
 what’s matter, whether she is within or no, if she
 has not a mind to see any body ?

Mr. Seal. I can’t tell, firrah, whether you are arch,
 or simple, but however get me a direct answer, and
 here’s a shilling for you.

Boy. Will you please to walk in, I’ll see what I
 can do for you.

Mr.

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Mr. Seal. I see you will be fit for your business, in time, child. But I expect to meet with nothing but extraordinaries in such a house.

Boy. Such a house! Sir, you han't seen it yet: pray walk in.

Mr. Seal. Sir, I will wait upon you. [Exeunt.

S C E N E Indiana's House.

Enter Isabella and Boy.

Ifab. What anxiety do I feel for this poor creature! What will be the end of her? Such a languishing unreserv'd passion for a man, that at last must certainly leave, or ruin her! and perhaps both! then the aggravation of the distress is, that she does not believe he will—not but I must own, if they are both what they would seem, they are made for one another, as much as Adam and Eve were, for there is no other of their kind, but themselves. [Enter Boy.] So Daniel! what news with you?

Boy. Madam, there's a gentleman below would speak with my lady.

Ifab. Sirrah! don't you know Mr. Bevil yet?

Boy. Madam, 'tis not the gentleman who comes every day, and asks for you, and won't go in till he knows whether you are with her or no.

Ifab. Ha! that's a particular I did not know before: Well! be it who it will, let him come up to me. [Exit Boy, and re-enters with Mr. Sealand.

Isabella looks amaz'd.]

Mr. Seal. Madam, I can't blame your being a little surpris'd, to see a perfect stranger make a visit, and——

Ifab. I am indeed surpris'd! ——— I see he does not know me.

Mr. Seal. You are prettily lodg'd here, Madam; in troth you seem to have every thing in plenty—a thousand a year, I warrant you, upon this pretty nest of rooms, and the dainty one within them.

[Aside, and looking about.

D

Ifab.

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Isab. [*Apart.*] Twenty years, it seems, have less effect in the alteration of a man of thirty, than of a girl of fourteen—he's almost still the same; but alas! I find, by other men, as well as himself, I am not what I was—As soon as he spoke, I was convinc'd 'twas He—How shall I contain my surprize and satisfaction! he must not know me yet.

Mr. Seal. Madam, I hope I don't give you any disturbance; but there is a young lady here, with whom I have a particular business to discourse, and I hope she will admit me to that favour.

Isab. Why, Sir, have you had any notice concerning her? I wonder who could give it you.

Mr. Seal. That, Madam, is fit only to be communicated to herself.

Isab. Well, Sir! you shall see her:—I find he knows nothing yet, nor shall from me: I am resolv'd, I will observe this interlude, this sport of Nature and of Fortune.—You shall see her presently, Sir; for now I am as a mother, and will trust her with you. [*Exit.*]

Mr. Seal. As a mother! right; that's the old phrase, for one of those commode ladies, who lend out beauty, for hire, to young gentlemen that have pressing occasions. But here comes the precious lady herself. In troth a very fightly woman—

Enter Indiana.

Ind. I am told, Sir, you have some affair that requires your speaking with me.

Mr. Seal. Yes, Madam: there came to my hands a bill drawn by Mr. Bevil, which is payable to-morrow; and he, in the intercourse of business, sent it to me, who have cash of his, and desir'd me to send a servant with it; but I have made bold to bring you the money myself.

Ind. Sir! was that necessary?

Mr. Seal. No, Madam; but, to be free with you, the fame of your beauty, and the regard, which Mr. Bevil is a little too well known to have for you, excited my curiosity.

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Ind. Too well known to have for me ! Your sober appearance, Sir, which my friend describ'd, made me expect no rudeness, or absurdity, at least ——— Who's there ? Sir, if you pay the money to a servant, 'twill be as well.

Mr. Seal. Pray, Madam, be not offended : I came hither on an innocent, nay a virtuous design ; and, if you will have patience to hear me, it may be as useful to you, as you are in a friendship with Mr. Bevil, as to my only daughter, whom I was this day disposing of.

Ind. You make me hope, Sir, I have mistaken you ; I am compos'd again ; be free, say on — what I am afraid to hear ———

[*Aside.*

Mr. Seal. I fear'd, indeed, an unwarranted passion here, but I did not think it was in abuse of so worthy an object ; so accomplish'd a lady, as your sense and mien bespeak ——— but the youth of our age care not what merit and virtue they bring to shame, so they gratify ———

Ind. Sir — you are going into very great errors — but, as you are pleas'd to say you see something in me that has chang'd, at least, the colour of your suspicions ; so has your appearance alter'd mine, and made me earnestly attentive to what has any way concern'd you, to enquire into my affairs and character.

Mr. Seal. How sensibly ! with what an air she talks !

Ind. Good Sir, be seated ——— and tell me tenderly ——— keep all your suspicions concerning me alive, that you may in a proper and prepared way ——— acquaint me why the care of your daughter obliges a person of your seeming worth and fortune, to be thus inquisitive about a wretched, helpless, friendless ——— [*weeping.*] But I beg your pardon — tho' I am an orphan, your child is not ; and your concern for her, it seems, has brought you hither — I'll be compos'd — pray go on, Sir.

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Mr. Seal. How could Mr. Bevil be such a monster, to injure such a woman?

Ind. No, Sir—you wrong him—he has not injur'd me—my support is from his bounty.

Mr. Seal. Bounty! when gluttons give high prices for delicacies, they are prodigious bountiful!

Ind. Still — still you will persist in that error—But my own fears tell me all—You are the gentleman, I suppose, for whose happy daughter he is design'd a husband, by his good father; 'and he has, perhaps, consented to the overture: he was here this morning, dress'd beyond his usual plainness, 'nay most sumptuously'—and he is to be, perhaps, this night a bridegroom.

Mr. Seal. I own he was intended such: but, Madam, on your account, I have determined to defer my daughter's marriage, till I am satisfied from your own mouth, of what nature are the obligations you are under to him.

Ind. His actions, Sir, his eyes have only made me think, he design'd to make me the partner of his heart. The goodness and gentleness of his demeanour made me misinterpret all — 'Twas my own hope, my own passion, that deluded me—he never made one amorous advance to me — His large heart, and bestowing hand, have only helpt the miserable: Nor know I why, but from his mere delight in virtue, that I have been his care, the object on which to indulge and please himself, with pouring favours!

Mr. Seal. Madam, I know not why it is, but I, as well as you, am methinks afraid of entering into the matter I came about; but 'tis the same thing, as if we had talk'd never so distinctly—he ne'er shall have a daughter of mine.

Ind. If you say this from what you think of me, you wrong yourself and him — Let not me, miserable tho' I may be, do injury to my benefactor — No, Sir, my treatment ought rather to reconcile you
to

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to his virtues——If to bestow, without a prospect of return ; if to delight in supporting, what might, perhaps, be thought an object of desire, with no other view than to be her guard against those who would not be so disinterested ; if these actions, Sir, can in a careful parent's eye commend him to a daughter, give yours, Sir, give her to my honest, generous Bevil——What have I to do, but sigh, and weep, to rave, run wild, a lunatic in chains, or hid in darkness, mutter in distracted starts, and broken accents, my strange, strange story !

Mr. Seal. Take comfort, Madam.

Ind. All my comfort must be to expostulate in madness, to relieve with frenzy my despair, and shrieking to demand of Fate, why—why was I born to such variety of sorrows ?

Mr. Seal. If I have been the least occasion——

Ind. No —— 'twas Heaven's high will I should be such—to be plunder'd in my cradle ! toss'd on the seas ! and even there, an infant captive ! to lose my mother, hear but of my father——to be adopted ! lose my adopter ! then plung'd again in worse calamities !

Mr. Seal. An infant captive !

Ind. Yet then ! to find the most charming of mankind, once more to set me free (from what I thought the last distress) to load me with his services, his bounties, and his favours ; to support my very life, in a way that stole, at the same time, my very soul itself from me.

Mr. Seal. And has young Bevil been this worthy man ?

Ind. Yet, then again, this very man to take another ! without leaving me the right, the pretence of easing my fond heart with tears ! for oh ! I can't reproach him, though the same hand that rais'd me to this height now throws me down the precipice.

Mr. Seal. Dear lady ! O yet one moment's patience :

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tience : my heart grows full with your affliction ; but yet, there's something in your story that——

Ind. My portion here is bitterness and sorrow.

Mr. Seal. Do not think so: pray answer me : does Bevil know your name and family ?

Ind. Alas ! too well ! O, could I be any other thing than what I am——I'll tear away all traces of my former self, my little ornaments, the remains of my first state, the hints of what I ought to have been——

[In her disorder she throws away a bracelet, which Sealand takes up, and looks earnestly on it.]

Mr. Seal. Ha ! what's this ? my eyes are not deceiv'd ? It is, it is the same ! the very bracelet which I bequeath'd my wife at our last mournful parting.

Ind. What said you, Sir ! your wife ! whither does my fancy carry me ? what means this unfelt motion at my heart ? and yet again, my fortune but deludes me ; for if I err not, Sir, your name is Sealand ; but my lost father's name was——

Mr. Seal. Danvers ! was it not ?

Ind. What new amazement ! that is indeed my family.

Mr. Seal. Know then, when my misfortunes drove me to the Indies, for reasons too tedious now to mention, I chang'd my name of Danvers into Sealand.

Enter Isabella.

Ifab. If yet there wants an explanation of your wonder, examine well this face, (yours, Sir, I well remember) gaze on, and read in me your sister Isabella !

Mr. Seal. My sister !

Ifab. But here's a claim more tender yet——your Indiana, Sir, your long lost daughter.

Mr. Seal. O my child ! my child !

Ind. All-gracious Heaven ! is it possible ! do I embrace my father !

Mr. Seal. And do I hold thee —— these passions are

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too strong for utterance——rise, rise, my child, and give my tears their way——O my sister!

[*Embracing her.*]

Isab. Now, dearest niece, 'my groundless fears, 'my painful cares no more shall vex thee:' if I have wrong'd thy noble lover with too hard suspicions, my just concern for thee, I hope, will plead my pardon.

Mr. Seal. O! make him then the full amends, and be yourself the messenger of joy: fly this instant! tell him all these wondrous turns of Providence in his favour! tell him I have now a daughter to bestow, which he no longer will decline: that this day he still shall be a bridegroom; nor shall a fortune, the merit which his father seeks, be wanting: tell him the reward of all his virtues waits on his acceptance. [*Exit Isab.*] My dearest Indiana!

[*Turns and embraces her.*]

Ind. Have I, then at last, a father's sanction on my love! his bounteous hand to give, and make my heart a present worthy of Bevil's generosity?

Mr. Seal. O my child! how are our sorrows past o'erpaid by such a meeting! though I have lost so many years of soft paternal dalliance with thee, yet, in one day to find thee thus, and thus bestow thee, in such perfect happiness! is ample, ample reparation! and yet again the merit of thy lover.

Ind. O! had I spirits left to tell you of his actions! 'how strongly filial duty has suppress'd his love; 'and how concealment still has doubled all his obligations;' the pride, the joy of his alliance, Sir, would warm your heart, as he has conquer'd mine.

Mr. Seal. How laudable is love, when born of virtue! I burn to embrace him——

Ind. See, Sir, my aunt already has succeeded, and brought him to your wishes.

Enter Isabella, with Sir John Bevil, Bevil jun. Mrs. Sealand, Cimberton, Myrtle, and Lucinda.

Sir J. Bev. [*Entering.*] Where, where's this scene of
of

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of wonder!—Mr. Sealand, I congratulate, on this occasion, our mutual happiness——your good sister, Sir, has, with the story of your daughter's fortune, fill'd us with surprize and joy! now all exceptions are remov'd: my son has now avow'd his love, and turn'd all former jealousies and doubts to approbation; and, I am told, your goodness has consented to reward him.

Mr. Seal. If, Sir, a fortune equal to his father's hopes, can make this object worthy his acceptance.

Bev. jun. I hear your mention, Sir, of fortune, with pleasure only, as it may prove the means to reconcile the best of fathers to my love——let him be provident, but let me be happy——My ever-destin'd, my acknowledg'd wife! [Embracing Indiana,

Ind. Wife!——O! my ever loved! my lord! my master!

Sir J. Bev. I congratulate myself as well as you, that I had a son, who could, under such disadvantages, discover your great merit.

Mr. Seal. O, Sir John! how vain, how weak is human prudence? what care, what foresight, what imagination could contrive such blest events to make our children happy, as Providence in one short hour has laid before us?

Cimb. [To *Mrs. Sealand.*] I am afraid, madam, Mr. Sealand is a little too busy for our affair! if you please we'll take another opportunity.

Mrs. Scal. Let us have patience, Sir. } During this
Cimb. But we make Sir Geoffry wait, } Bev. jun. pre-
Madam. } sents Lucinda

Myrt. O Sir, I am not in haste. } to Indiana.

Mr. Seal. But here! here's our general benefactor! excellent young man, that could be at once a lover to her beauty, and a parent to her virtue.

Bev. jun. If you think that an obligation, Sir, give me leave to over-pay myself, in the only instance that now can add to my felicity, by begging you to bestow this Lady on Mr. Myrtle.

Mr.

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Mr. Seal. She is his, without reserve, (I beg he may be sent for)——Mr. Cimberton, notwithstanding you never had my consent, yet there is, since I last saw you, another objection to your marriage with my daughter.

Cimb. I hope, Sir, your lady has conceal'd nothing from me?

Mr. Seal. Troth, Sir! nothing but what was conceal'd from myself: another daughter, who has an undoubted title to half my estate.

Cimb. How! Mr. Sealand! why then if half Mrs. Lucinda's fortune is gone, you can't say that any of my estate is settled upon her: I was in treaty for the whole; but, if that is not to be come at, to be sure there can be no bargain —— Sir, —— I have nothing to do but to take my leave of your good lady, my cousin, and beg pardon for the trouble I have given this old gentleman.

Myrt. That you have, Mr. Cimberton, with all my heart.

[Discovers himself.]

Omnes. Mr. Myrtle.

Myrt. And I beg pardon of the whole company, that I assumed the person of Sir Geoffry, only to be present at the danger of this lady's being disposed of, and in her utmost exigence to assert my right to her; which if her parents will ratifie, as they once favour'd my pretensions, no abatement of fortune shall lessen her value to me.

Luc. Generous man!

Mr. Seal. If, Sir, you can overlook the injury of being in treaty with one, who has meanly left her, as you have generously asserted your right in her, she is yours.

Luc. Mr. Myrtle, tho' you have ever had my heart, yet now I find I love you more, because I bring you less.

Myrt. We have much more than we want; and
'I am glad any event has contributed to the discovery
'of our real inclinations to each other.'

Mrs. Seal. Well! however I'm glad the girl's disposed of any way.

*[Aside.
Bev.]*

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Bev. Myrtle ! no longer rivals now, but brothers.

Myrt. Dear Bevil ! you are born to triumph over me ! but now our competition ceases : I rejoice in the preheminance of your virtue, and your alliance adds charms to Lucinda.

Sir J. Bev. Now, ladies and gentlemen, you have set the world a fair example : your happiness is owing to your constancy and merit ; and the several difficulties you have struggled with, evidently shew

*Whate'er the generous mind itself denies,
The secret care of Providence supplies.*

[Exeunt.]



E P I L O G U E.

By Mr. WELSTED.

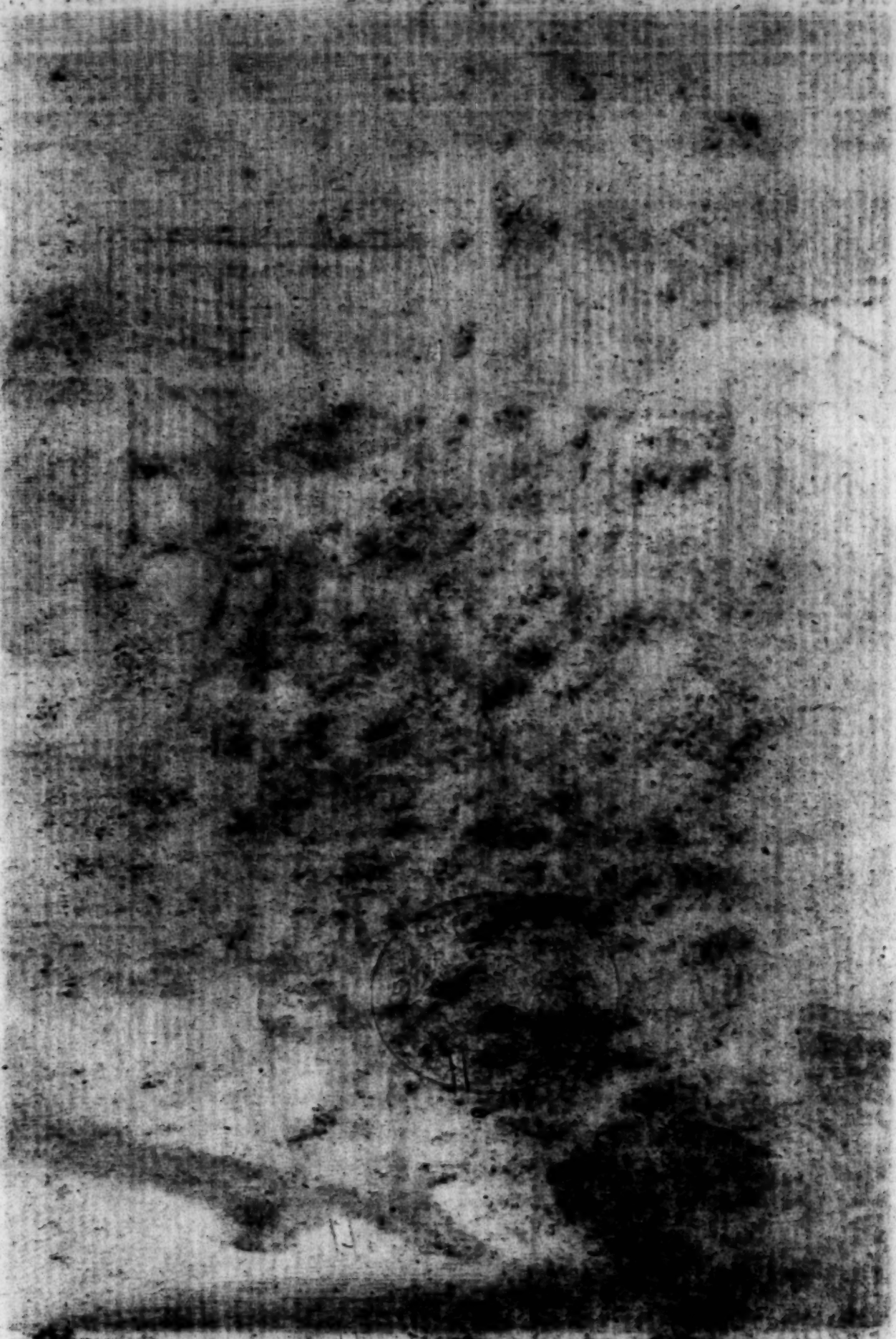
*O*UR author, whom intreaties cannot move,
Spite of the dear coquetry that you love,
Swears he'll not frustrate (so he plainly means)
By a loose Epilogue, his indecent scenes.
Is it not, Sirs, hard fate I meet to-day,
To keep me rigid still, beyond the play?
And yet, I'm sav'd a world of pains that way.
I now can look, I now can move at ease,
Nor need I torture those poor limbs to please;
Nor with the hand or foot attempt surprize,
Nor wrest my features, nor fatigue my eyes:
Bless me! what freakish gambols have I play'd!
What motions try'd, and wanton looks betray'd!
Out of pure kindness all! to over-rule
The threaten'd hiss, and screen some scribbling fool,
With more respect I'm entertain'd to-night:
Our author thinks, I can with ease delight,
My artless looks, while modest graces arm,
He says, I need but to appear, and charm.
A wife so form'd, by these example bred,
Pours joy and gladness 'round the marriage bed;
Soft source of comfort, kind relief from care,
And 'tis her least perfection to be fair.
The nymph with Indiana's worth who vies,
A nation will behold with Bevil's eyes.

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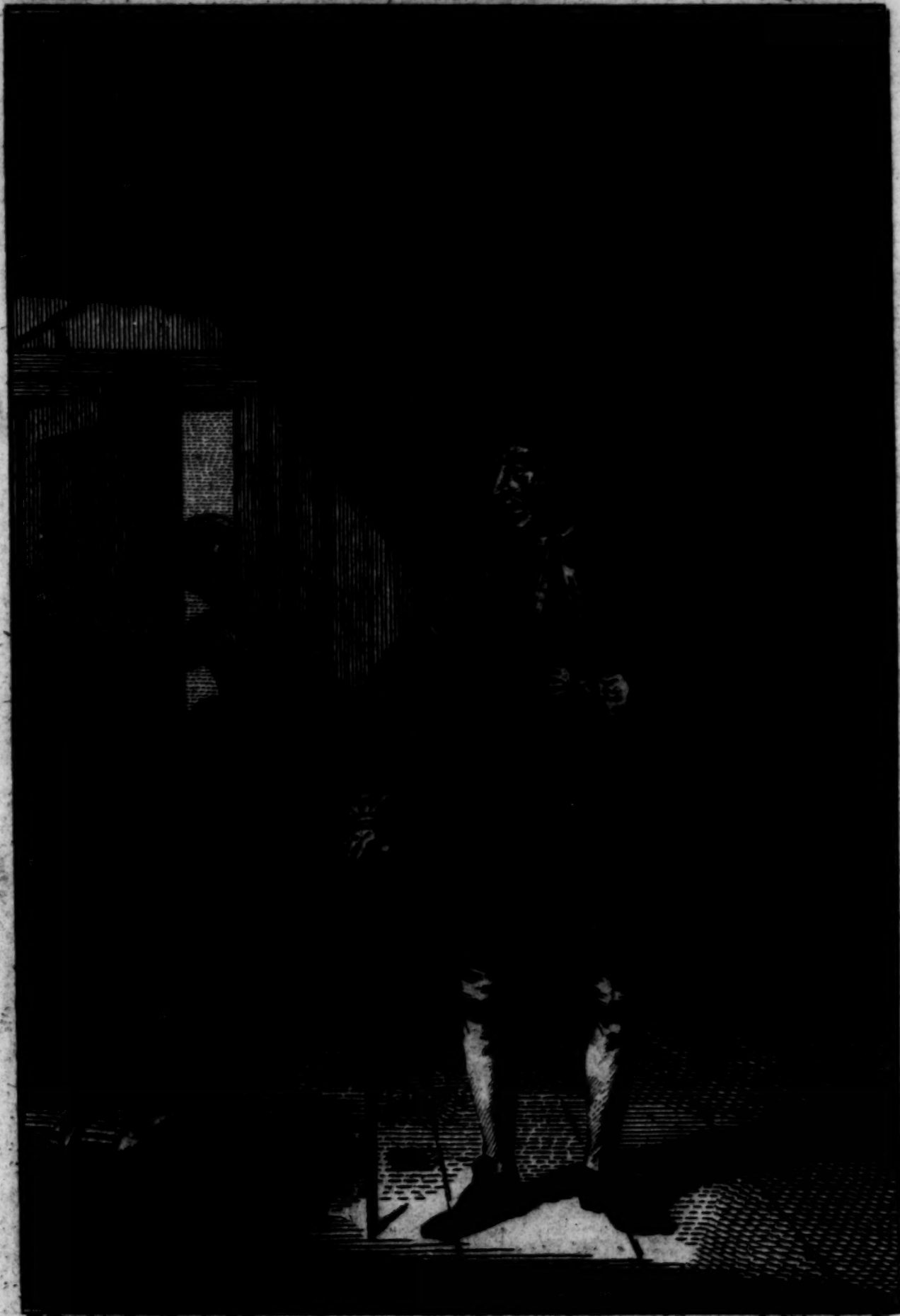


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WASHINGTON, D. C.

Act II.

THE MISER.

Scene 6.



Painted by J. G. Smith.

C. Ormiston Sc.

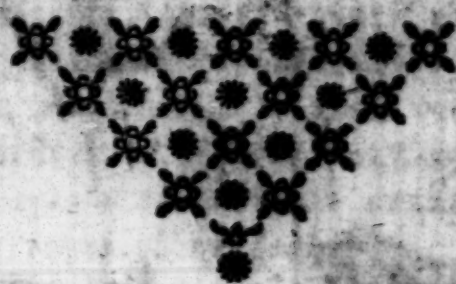
*MR. YATES in the Character of LOVEGOLD.
All's well hitherto; my dear money is safe.
Is it you Lappet?*

Published June 29, 1776. by T. Lowndes & Partners.

THE
M I S E R.
A
C O M E D Y,

WRITTEN BY
HENRY FIELDING, Esq.

Marked with the Variations in the
MANAGERS BOOKS,
AT THE
Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane.



L O N D O N :

Printed for T. Lowndes, T. Caſſon, T. Davies, T. Cadell, Wilſon
and Nicol, J. Richardſon, T. Becket, W. Nicoll, G. Robinſon,
S. Bladon, H. S. Woodfall, W. Woodfall, and T. Evans.

M.DCC.LXXVI.



☞ The Reader is desired to observe, that the Passages omitted in the Representation at the Theatres are here preserved, and marked with inverted Commas; as in Line 1 to 10 in Page 9.—*Also*, The Additions made at the Theatres are distinguished by *Italics* between inverted Commas; as in the last Line of Page 27, &c.

PROLOGUE,

Written by a FRIEND.

*T*OO long the slighted comic Muse has mourn'd,
Her face quite alter'd, and her art o'erturn'd;
That force of Nature now no more she sees,
With which so well her Johnson knew to please.
No characters from Nature now we trace,
All serve to empty books of common-place:
Our modern bards, who to assemblies stray,
Frequent the Park, the visit, or the play,
Regard not what fools do, but what wits say.
Just they retail each quibble to the town,
That surely must admire what is its own.
Thus without characters from nature got,
Without a moral, and without a plot,
A dull collection of inspid jokes,
Some stole from conversation, some from books,
Provided lords and ladies give 'em vent,
We call high Comedy, and seem content.
But to regale with other sort of fare,
To-night our author treats you with Moliere.
Moliere, who Nature's inmost secrets knew,
Whose justest pen, like Kneller's pencil drew.
In whose strong scenes all characters are shown,
Not by low jests, but actions of their own.
Happy our English bard, if your applause
Grant h'as not injur'd the French author's cause.
From that alone arises all his fear;
He must be safe, if he has sav'd Moliere.

Dramatis Personæ, 1776.

Lovegold, the Miser
 Frederick, his Son
 Harriet, his Daughter
 Clermont
 Mrs. Wisely
 Mariana
 Ramilie, servant to Frederick
 Lappet, maid to Harriet
 Wheedle, maid to Mariana
 Mr. Decoy, a Broker
 Mr. Furnish, an Upholsterer
 Mr. Sparkle, a Jeweller
 Mr. Sattin, a Mercer
 Mr. List, a Taylor
 A Lawyer

At Drury Lane.
 Mr. YATES.
 Mr. BRERETON.
 Miss HOPKINS.
 Mr. DAVIES.
 Mrs. CROSS.
 Mrs. KING.
 Mr. DODD.
 Mrs. ABINGTON.
 Mrs. LOVE.
 Mr. WRIGHT.
 Mr. EVERARD.
 Mr. WRIGHTON.
 Mr. GRIFFITH.
 Mr. WALDRON.
 Mr. GARLAND.

Covent Garden.
 Mr. SHUTER.
 Mr. WROUGHTON.
 Mrs. WHITEFIELD.
 Mr. WHITEFIELD.
 Mrs. PITT.
 Mrs. BULKELEY.
 Mr. LEE LEWIS.
 Mrs. GREEN.

Servants, &c.

SCENE, LONDON.

T H E
M I S E R.

A C T I. SCENE Lovegold's house.

Lappet and Ramilie.

Lap. I'LL hear no more. Perfidious fellow! have I for thee slighted so many good matches? Have I for thee turn'd off Sir Oliver's steward, and my Lord Landy's butler, and several others thy betters, and all to be affronted in so public a manner?

Ramil. Do but hear me, Madam!

Lap. If thou wou'dst have neglected me, was there nobody else to dance a minuet with but Mrs. Susan Crossstitch, whom you know to be my utter aversion?

Ramil. Curse on all balls! henceforth I shall hate the sound of a violin.

Lap. I have more reason, I am sure, after having been the jest of the whole company: what must they think of me, when they see you, after I have countenanced your addresses in the eye of the world, take out another lady before me?

Ramil. I'm sure the world must think worse of me, did they imagine, Madam, I could prefer any other to you.

Lap. None of your wheedling, Sir, that won't do. If you ever hope to speak to me more, let me see you affront the little minx in the next assembly you meet her.

Ramil. I'll do it; and luckily, you know, we are to have a ball at my Lord Landy's the first night he lies out of town, where I'll give your revenge ample satisfaction.

Lap. On that condition, I pardon you this time; but if ever you do the like again—

Ramil. May I be banish'd for ever from those dear eyes, and be turn'd out of the family while you live in it.

Enter Wheedle.

Wheed. Dear Mrs. Lappet!

Lap. My dear, this is extremely kind.

Wheed. It is what all your acquaintance must do that expect to see you. It is in vain to hope for the favour of a visit.

Lap. Nay, dear creature, now you are barbarous: my young lady has staid at home so much, I have not had one moment to myself: the first time I had gone out, I am sure, Madam, would have been to wait on Mrs. Wheedle.

Wheed. My lady has staid at home too pretty much lately. O Mr. Ramilie, are you confin'd too! your master does not stay at home, I am sure: he can find the way to our house, tho' you can't.

Ramil. That is the only happiness, Madam, I envy him: but faith! I don't know how it is in this parliament time, one's whole days are so taken up in the court of Requests, and one's evenings at quadrille: the duce take me if I have seen one opera since I came to town. Oh! now I mention operas, if you have a mind to see Cato, I believe I can steal my master's silver ticket; for I know he is engaged to-morrow with some gentlemen, who never leave their bottle for music.

Lap. Ah, the savages!

Wheed. No one can say that of you, Mr. Ramilie; you prefer music to every thing—

Ramil.——But the ladies. [*Bell rings.*] So there's my summons!

Lap. Well, but shall we never have a party of quadrille more?

Wheed. O, don't name it, I have work'd my eyes out since I saw you; for my lady has taken a whim of flourishing all her old cambrick pinnars and handkerchiefs; in short, my dear, no journey-woman sempstress is half so much a slave as I am.

Lap. Why do you stay with her?

Wheed. La, child, where can one better one's self? all the ladies of our acquaintance are just the same. Besides, there are some little things that make amends: my lady has a whole train of admirers.

Ramil. That, Madam, is the only circumstance wherein she has the honour of resembling you. [*Bell rings louder.*]

louder.] You hear, Madam, I am obliged to leave you
— [Bell rings.] So, so, so, would the bell were in
your guts! [Exit.

Lap. O Wheedle! I am quite sick of this family:
the old gentleman grows more covetous every day he
lives. Every thing is under lock and key; I can scarce
ask you to eat or drink.

Wheed. Thank you, my dear; but I have drank half
a dozen dishes of chocolate already this morning.

Lap. Well; but, my dear, I have a whole budget of
news to tell you. I have made some notable discoveries.

Wheed. Pray, let us hear 'em. I have some secrets
of our family too, which you shall know by and by.
What a pleasure there is in having a friend to tell these
things to!

Lap. You know, my dear, last summer, my young lady
had the misfortune to be overset in a boat between
Richmond and Twickenham, and that a certain young
gentleman, plunging immediately into the water, sav'd
her life at the hazard of his own—Oh! I shall never
forget the figure she made at her return home, so wet,
so draggled—ha, ha, ha!

Wheed. Yes, my dear, I know how all your fine ladies
look, when they are ever so little disordered—they
have no need to be so vain of themselves.

Lap. You are no stranger to my master's way of re-
warding people: when the poor gentleman brought
miss home, my master meets 'em at the door, and, with-
out asking any question, very civilly shuts it against him.
Well, for a whole fortnight afterwards, I was continu-
ally entertained with the young spark's bravery, and
gallantry, and generosity, and beauty.

Wheed. I can easily guess: I suppose she was rather
warm'd than cool'd by the water. These mistresses of
ours, for all their pride, are made of just the same flesh
and blood as we are.

Lap. About a month ago, my young lady goes to the
play in an undress, and takes me with her. We sat in
Burton's box, where, as the devil would have it, whom
should we meet with but this very gentleman? her
blushes soon discovered to me who he was: in short, the
gentleman entertained her the whole play, and I much
mistake, if ever she was so agreeably entertained in her
life.

life. Well, as we were going out, a rude fellow thrusts his hand into my lady's bosom, upon which her champion fell upon him, and did so maul him — My lady fainted away in my arms; but as soon as she came to herself — had you seen how she looked on him. Ah! Sir, says she, in a mighty pretty tone, sure you were born for my deliverance: he handed her into a hackney coach, and set us down at home. From this moment letters began to fly on both sides.

Wheed. And you took care to see the post paid, I hope.

Lap. Never fear that — and now what do you think we have contriv'd among us? We have got this very gentleman into the house in the quality of my master's clerk.

Wheed. Soh! here's fine billing and cooing, I warrant; miss is in a fine condition.

Lap. Her condition is pretty much as it was yet. How long it will continue so, I know not. I am making up my matters as fast as I can; for this house holds not me after the discovery.

Wheed. I think you have no great reason to lament the loss of a place where the master keeps his own keys.

Lap. The devil take the first inventor of locks, say I: but come, my dear, there is one key which I keep, and that, I believe, will furnish us with some sweetmeats: so if you will walk in with me, I'll tell you a secret which concerns your family. It is in your power, perhaps, to be serviceable to me. I hope, my dear, you will keep these secrets safe, for one would not have it known that one publishes all the affairs of a family, while one stays in it. [*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E *a Garden.*

Clermont and Harriet.

Cler. Why are you melancholy, my dear Harriet? do you repent that promise of yours, which has made me the happiest of mankind?

Har. You little know my heart, if you can think it capable of repenting any thing I have done towards your happiness. If I am melancholy, it is that I have it not in my power to make you as happy as I would.

Cler. Thou art too bounteous. Every tender word from those dear lips, lays obligations on me I never
can

can repay; but, if to love, to doat on you more than life itself, to watch your eyes, that I may obey your wishes before you speak them, can discharge me from any part of that vast debt I owe you, I will be punctual in the payment.

Har. It were ungenerous in me to doubt you, and when I think what you have done for me, believe me, I must think the balance on your side.

Cler. Generous creature! and dost thou not for me hazard the eternal anger of your father, the reproaches of your family, the censures of the world, who always blame the conduct of that person who sacrifices interest to any consideration.

Har. As for the censures of the world, I despise them while I do not deserve them: Folly is forwarder to censure Wisdom, than Wisdom Folly. I were weak indeed not to embrace real happiness, because the world does not call it so.

Cler. But see, my dearest, your brother is come into the garden!

Har. Is it not safe, think you, to let him into our secret?

Cler. You know, by outwardly humouring your father, in railing against the extravagancies of young men, I have brought him to look on me as his enemy; it will be first proper to set him right in that point. Besides, in managing the old gentleman, I shall still be oblig'd to a behaviour which the impatience of his temper may not bear; therefore, I think it not adviseable to trust him; at least yet—he will observe us. Adieu, my heart's only joy. [Exit.

Har. Honest creature! what happiness may I not propose in a life with such a husband? what is there in grandeur to recompense the loss of him? Parents choose as often ill for us, as we for ourselves. They are too apt to forget how seldom true happiness lives in a palace or rides in a coach and six.

Enter Frederick.

Fred. Dear Harriet, good-morrow: I am glad to find you alone; for I have an affair to impart to you, that I am ready to burst with.

Har. You know, brother, I am a trusty confidant:

A 5

Fred.

Fred. As ever wore petticoats : but this is an affair of such consequence——

Har. Or it were not worth your telling me.

Fred. Or your telling again : in short, you never could discover it ; I could afford you ten years to guess it in. I am—you will laugh immoderately when you know it. I am—it is impossible to tell you. In a word—I am in love.

Har. In love !

Fred. Violently, to distraction : so much in love, that without more hopes than I at present see any possibility of obtaining, I cannot live three days.

Har. And has this violent distemper, pray, come upon you of a sudden ?

Fred. No, I have bred it a long time. It hath been growing these several weeks. I stifled it as long as I could ; but it is now come to a crisis, and I must either have the woman, or you will have no brother.

Har. But who is this woman ? for you have concealed it so well, that I can't even guess.

Fred. In the first place, she is a most intolerable coquette.

Har. That is a description I shall never find her out by. There are so many of her sisters, you might as well tell me the colour of her complexion.

Fred. Secondly, she is almost eternally at cards.

Har. You must come to particulars : I shall never discover your mistress till you tell me more than that she is a woman, and lives in this town.

Fred. Her fortune is very small.

Har. I find you are enumerating her charms.

Fred. Oh ! I have only shewn you the reverse ; but were you to behold the medal on the right side, you would see beauty, wit, gentleness, politeness—in a word, you would see Mariana.

Har. Mariana ! ha, ha, ha ! you have started a wild-goose chase, indeed. But if you could ever prevail on her, you may depend on it, it is an arrant impossibility to prevail on my father ; and you may easily imagine what success a disinherited son may likely expect with a woman of her temper.

Fred. I know 'tis difficult, but nothing's impossible to love, at least nothing's impossible to woman ; and therefore,

therefore, if you and the ingenious Mrs. Lappet will but lay your heads together in my favour, I shall be far from despairing; and in return, sister, for this kindness—

Har. And in return, brother, for this kindness, you may perhaps have it in your power to do me a favour of pretty much the same nature.

Love. [*without.*] Rogue! villain!

Har. Soh! what's the matter now? what can have thrown my father into this passion?

Fred. The loss of an old slipper, I suppose, or something of equal consequence. Let us step aside into the next walk, and talk more of our affairs. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter Lovegold and Ramilie.

Love. Answer me not, firrah; but get you out of my house.

Ramil. Sir, I am your son's servant, and not yours, Sir; and I won't go out of the house, Sir, unless I am turn'd out by my proper master, Sir.

Love. Sirrah, I'll turn your master out after you, like an extravagant rascal as he is: he has no need of a servant while he is in my house; and here he dresses out a fellow at more expence than a prudent man might clothe a large family at: it's plain enough what use he keeps you for; but I will have no spy upon my affairs, no rascal continually prying into all my actions, devouring all I have, and hunting about in every corner to see what he may steal.

Ramil. Steal! a likely thing, indeed, to steal from a man who locks up every thing he has, and stands centry upon it day and night.

Love. I'm all over in a sweat, lest this fellow shou'd suspect something of my money. [*Aside.*] Harke, rascal, come hither: I would advise you not to run about the town, and tell every body you meet that I have money hid.

Ramil. Why, have you any money hid, Sir?

Love. No, firrah, I don't say I have; but you may raise such a report, nevertheless.

Ramil. 'Tis equal to me whether you have money hid or no, since I cannot find it. [*Aside.*]

Love. D'ye mutter, firrah? Get you out of my house, I say, get out this instant!

Ramil. Well, Sir, I am going.

Love. Come back: let me desire you to carry nothing away with you.

Ramil. What should I carry?

Love. That's what I would see. These boot-sleeves were certainly intended to be the receivers of stolen goods; and I wish the taylor had been hang'd who invented them. Turn your pockets inside out, if you please; but you are too practised a rogue to put any thing there. These damn'd bags have had many a good thing in them, I warrant you.

Ramil. Give me my bag, Sir; I am in the most danger of being robb'd.

Love. Come, come, be honest, and return what thou hast taken from me.

Ramil. Ay, Sir, that I could do with all my heart; for I have taken nothing from you but some boxes on the ear.

Love. And hast thou really stolen nothing?

Ramil. No, really, Sir.

Love. Then get out of my house, while 'tis all well; and go to the devil.

Ramil. Ay, any where from such an old covetous curmudgeon. [Exit.]

Love. So, there's one plague gone; now I will go pay a visit to the dear casket.

Enter Frederick and Harriet.

In short, I must find some safer place to deposit those three thousand guineas in, which I received yesterday; three thousand guineas are a sum—

O heavens! I have betray'd myself! my passion has transported me to talk aloud, and I have been overheard. How now! what's the matter?

Fred. The matter, Sir!

Love. Yes, the matter, Sir! I suppose you can repeat more of my words than these: I suppose you have overheard—

Fred. What, Sir?

Love. That—

Fred. Sir!

Love. What I was just now saying.

Har. Pardon me, Sir, we really did not.

Love. Well, I see you did overhear something, and so I will tell you the whole: I was saying to myself, in this

this great scarcity of money, what a happiness it would be to have three thousand guineas by one: I tell you this, that you might not misunderstand me, and imagine that I said I had three thousand guineas.

Fred. We enter not into your affairs, Sir.

Love. Ah! wou'd I had those three thousand guineas!

Fred. In my opinion —

Love. It wou'd make my affairs extremely easy.

Fred. Then it is very easily in your power to raise 'em, Sir; that the whole world knows.

Love. I raise 'em! I raise three thousand guineas easily! My children are my greatest enemies, and will, by their way of talking, and by the extravagant expences they run into, be the occasion that one of these days somebody will cut my throat, imagining me to be made up of nothing but guineas.

Fred. What expence, Sir, do I run into?

Love. How have you the assurance to ask me that, Sir? when, if one was but to pick those fine feathers of yours off, from head to foot, one might purchase a very comfortable annuity out of them: A fellow here, with a very good fortune upon his back, wonders that he is call'd extravagant. In short, Sir, you must rob me to appear in this manner.

Fred. How, Sir! rob you?

Love. Ay, rob me! or how cou'd you support this extravagance?

Fred. Alas, Sir, there are fifty young fellows of my acquaintance, that support greater extravagancies, and no one knows how: Ah, Sir! there are ten thousand pretty ways of living in this town, without robbing one's father.

Love. What necessity is there for all that lace on your coat? and all bought at the first hand too, I warrant you. If you will be fine, is there not such a place as Monmouth-street in this town, where a man may buy a suit for the third part of the sum which his taylor demands? And then, periwigs! what need has a man of periwigs, when he may wear his own hair? I dare swear a good perwig can't cost less than fifteen or twenty shillings. Hey-day! what are they making signs to one another which shall pick my pocket?

Har.

Har. My brother and I, Sir, are disputing which shall speak to you first; for we have both an affair of consequence to mention to you.

Love. And I have an affair of consequence to mention to you both. Pray, son, you who are a fine gentleman, and converse much amongst the ladies, what think you of a certain young lady, called Mariana?

Fred. Mariana, Sir!

Love. Ay, what do you think of her?

Fred. Think of her, Sir?

Love. Why do you repeat my words? Ay, what do you think of her?

Fred. Why, I think her the most charming woman in the world.

Love. Wou'd she not be a desirable match?

Fred. So desirable, that, in my opinion, her husband will be the happiest of mankind.

Love. Does she not promise to make a good housewife?

Fred. Oh! the best housewife upon earth.

Love. Might not a husband, think ye, live very easy and happy with her?

Fred. Doubtless, Sir.

Love. There is one thing I'm a little afraid of, that is, that she has not quite as much fortune as one might fairly expect.

Fred. O Sir! consider but her merit, and you may easily make an abatement in her fortune; for Heaven's sake, Sir, don't let that prevent your design. Fortune is nothing in comparison with her beauty and merit.

Love. Pardon me there: however, there may be some matters found, perhaps, to make up some little deficiency; and if you would, to oblige your father, retrench your extravagancies on this occasion, perhaps the difference, in some time, might be made up.

Fred. My dearest father, I'll bid adieu to all extravagance for ever.

Love. Thou art a dutiful, good boy: and since I find you have the same sentiments with me, provided she can but make out a pretty tolerable fortune, I am ev'n resolv'd to marry her.

Fred. Ha! you resolved to marry Mariana?

Love. Ay, to marry Mariana.

Har.

Har. Who, you, you, you?

Love. Yes, I, I, I.

Fred. I beg you will pardon me, Sir; a sudden dizziness has seized me, and I must beg leave to retire.

[*Exit.*

Love. This, daughter, is what I have resolv'd for myself: as for your brother, I have a certain widow in my eye for him; and you, my dear, shall marry our good neighbour Mr. Spindle.

Har. I marry Mr. Spindle!

Love. Yes; he is a prudent, wise man, not much above fifty, and has a great fortune in the funds.

Har. I thank you, my dear papa, but I had rather not marry, if you please.

[*Curtesying.*

Love. [*Mimicking her curtsy.*] I thank you, my good daughter, but I had rather you should marry him, if you please.

Har. Pardon me, dear Sir.

Love. Pardon me, dear Madam.

Har. Not all the fathers upon earth shall force me to it.

Love. Did ever mortal hear a girl talk in this manner to her father?

Har. Did ever father attempt to marry his daughter after such a manner? In short, Sir, I have ever been obedient to you; but as this affair concerns my happiness only, and not yours, I hope you will give me leave to consult my own inclination.

Love. I wou'd not have you provoke me: I am resolv'd upon the match.

Enter Clermont.

Cler. Some people, Sir, upon justice-business, desire to speak with your worship.

Love. I can attend to no business, this girl has so perplex'd me. Hussy, you shall marry as I wou'd have you, or—

Cler. Forgive my interposing: dear Sir, what's the matter? Madam, let me intreat you not to put your father into a passion.

Love. Clermont, you are a prudent young fellow. Here's a baggage of a daughter, who refuses the most advantageous match that ever was offer'd, both to her

her and to me. A man of a vast estate offers to take her without a portion!

Cler. Without a portion! Consider, dear Madam, can you refuse a gentleman who offers to take you without a portion?

Love. Aye, consider what that saves your father.

Har. Yes, but I consider what I am to suffer.

Cler. That's true indeed: you will think on that, Sir. Tho' money be the first thing to be considered in all affairs of life, yet some little regard should be had in this case to inclination.

Love. Without a portion.

Cler. You are in the right, Sir, that decides the thing at once: and yet, I know there are people, who, on this occasion, object against a disparity of age and temper, which too often make the married state utterly miserable.

Love. Without a portion.

Cler. Ah! there's no answering that.—— Who can oppose such a reason as that? And yet there are several parents, who study the inclinations of their children more than any other thing, that would by no means sacrifice them to interest; and who esteem, as the very first article of marriage, that happy union of affections, which is the foundation of every blessing attending on a married state——and who——

Love. Without a portion.

Cler. Very true; that stops your mouth at once—— Without a portion! Where is the person who can find an argument against that?

Love. Ha! is not that the barking of a dog? Some villains are in search of my money.—— Don't stir from hence: I'll return in an instant. *[Exit.]*

Cler. My dearest Harriet, how shall I express the agony I am in on your account?

Har. Be not too much alarm'd, since you may depend on my resolution. It may be in the power of Fortune to delay our happiness, but no power shall force me to destroy your hopes by any other match.

Cler. Thou kindest, lovely creature!

Enter Lovegold.

Love. Thank Heaven, it was nothing but my fear.

Cler. Yes, a daughter must obey her father: she

is not to consider the shape, or the air, or the age of a husband; but when a man offers to take her without a portion, she is to have him, let him be what he will.

Love. Admirably well said, indeed!

Cler. Madam, I ask your pardon if my love for yourself and your family carries me a little too far. Be under no concern; I dare swear I shall bring her to it.

[To Lovegold:

Love. Do, do: I'll go in and see what these people want with me. Give her a little more now, while she's warm: you will be time enough to draw the warrant.

Cler. When a lover offers, Madam, to take a daughter without a portion, one should enquire no farther; every thing is contained in that one article, and "without a portion," supplies the want of beauty, youth, family, wisdom, honour, and honesty.

Love. Gloriously said, spoke like an oracle. [Exit.

Cler. So, once more we are alone together: believe me, this is a most painful hypocrisy: 'it tortures me to oppose your opinion, tho' I am not in earnest, nor suspected by you of being so. O Harriet! how is the noble passion of love abus'd by vulgar souls, who are incapable of tasting its delicacies!' When love is great as mine,

*None can its pleasures or its pains declare;
We can but feel how exquisite they are.* [Exeunt.

A C T II. S C E N E *continues.*

Frederick and Ramilie.

Fred. **W**HAT is the reason, Sirrah, you have been out of the way, when I gave you orders to stay here?

Ramil. Yes, Sir, and here did I stay, according to your orders, till your good father turn'd me out; and it is, Sir, at the extreme hazard of a cudgel that I return back again.

Fred. Well, Sir, and what answer have you brought touching the money?

Ram. Ah, Sir! it is a terrible thing to borrow money: a man must have dealt with the devil to deal with a scrivener.

Fred.

Fred. Then it won't do, I suppose?

Ramil. Pardon me, Sir, Mr. Decoy, the broker, is a most industrious person: he says he has done every thing in his power to serve you; for he has taken a particular fancy to your honour.

Fred. So then, I shall have the five hundred, shall I?

Ramil. Yes, Sir; but there are some trifling conditions which your honour must submit to before the affair can be finish'd.

Fred. Did he bring you to the speech of the person that is to lend the money?

Ramil. Ah, Sir! things are not manag'd in that manner: he takes more care to conceal himself than you do: there are greater mysteries in these matters than you imagine: why, he would not so much as tell me the lender's name; and he is to bring him to-day to talk with you in some third person's house, to learn from your own mouth the particulars of your estate and family: I dare swear, the very name of your father will make all things easy.

Fred. Chiefly the death of my mother, whose jointure no one can hinder me of.

Ramil. Here, Sir, I have brought the articles: Mr. Decoy told me he took 'em from the mouth of the person himself. Your honour will find them extremely reasonable—the broker was forc'd to stickle hard to get 'such good ones:' In the first place, the lender is to see all his securities; and the borrower must be of age, and heir apparent to a large estate, without flaw in the title, and intirely free from all incumbrance; and that the lender may run as little risk as possible, the borrower must insure his life for the sum lent: if he be an officer in the army, he is to make over his whole pay, for the payment of both principal and interest, which, that the lender may not burden his conscience with any scruples, is to be no more than 30 per cent.

Fred. Oh the conscientious rascal!

Ramil. But as the said lender has not by him, at present, the sum demanded; and that, to oblige the borrower, he is himself forc'd to borrow of another, at the rate of 4 per cent. he thinks it but reasonable, that the first borrower, over and above the 30 per cent. aforesaid, shall

shall also pay this 4 per cent. since it is for his service only that this sum is borrowed.

Fred. O the devil! What a Jew is here!

Ramil. You know, Sir, what you have to do—— he can't oblige you to these terms.

Fred. Nor can I oblige him to lend me the money without them; and you know that I must have it, let the conditions be what they will.

Ramil. Ay, Sir, why that was what I told him.

Fred. Did you so, rascal? No wonder he insists on such conditions, if you laid open my necessities to him.

Ramil. Alas! Sir, I only told it to the broker, who is your friend, and has your interest very much at heart.

Fred. Well; is this all, or are there any more reasonable articles?

Ramil. Of the five hundred pounds required, the lender can pay down, in cash, no more than four hundred; and for the rest the borrower must take in goods, of which here follows the catalogue.

Fred. What, in the devil's name, is the meaning of all this?

Ramil. *Imprimis*, 'One large yellow camlet bed, lin'd with fatten, very little eaten by the moths, and wanting only one curtain. Six stuff chairs of the same, a little torn, and the frames worm-eaten, otherwise not in the least the worse for wearing. One large pier glass, with only one crack in the middle. One suit of tapestry-hangings, in which are curiously wrought the loves of Mars and Venus, Venus and Adonis, Cupid and Psyche, with many other amorous stories, which make the hangings very proper for a bed-chamber.

Fred. What the devil is here!

Ramil. *Item*, One suit of drugget, with silver buttons, the buttons only the worse for wearing. *Item*, two muskets, one of which only wants the lock. One large silver watch, with Tompion's name to it. One snuff-box, with a picture in it, bought at Mr. Deard's, a proper present for a mistress. Five pictures without frames; if not originals, all copies by good hands; and one fine frame without a picture.

Fred. Oons! what use have I for all this?

Ramil.

Ramil. Several valuable books; amongst which are all the Journals printed for these five years last past, handsomely bound and letter'd.——The whole works in divinity of ——

Fred. Read no more: confound the curst extortioner; I shall pay 100 per cent.

Ramil. Ah, Sir! I wish your honour would consider of it in time.

Fred. I must have money: to what straits are we reduc'd by the curst avarice of fathers! well may we wish them dead, when their death is the only introduction to our living.

Ramil. Such a father as yours, Sir, is enough to make one do something more than wish him dead. 'For my part, I have never had any inclination towards hanging; and, I thank Heaven, I have lived to see whole sets of my companions swing out of the world, while I have had address enough to quit all manner of gallantries the moment I smelt the halter:' I have always had an utter aversion to the smell of hemp; but this rogue of a father of yours, Sir——Sir, I ask your pardon——has so provok'd me, that I have often wish'd to rob him, and rob him I shall in the end, that's certain.

Fred. Give me that paper, that I may consider a little these moderate articles.

Enter Lovegold and Decoy.

Decoy. In short, Sir, he is a very extravagant young fellow, and so press'd by his necessities, that you may bring him to what terms you please.

Love. But do you think, Mr. Decoy, there is no danger? Do you know the name, the family, and the estate of the borrower?

Decoy. No, I cannot give you any perfect information yet, for it was by the greatest accident in the world that he was recommended to me; but you will learn all these from his own lips, and his man assur'd me, you wou'd make no difficulty, the moment you knew the name of his father: all that I can tell you is, that his servant says the old gentleman is extremely rich: he call'd him a covetous old rascal.

Love. Ay, that is the name which these spendthrifts, and the rogues their servants, give to all honest prudent

gent men, who know the world, and the value of their money.

Decoy. This young gentleman is an only son, and is so little afraid of any future competitors, that he offers to be bound, if you insist on it, that his father shall die within these eight months.

Love. Ay, there's something in that: I believe then, I shall let him have the money. Charity, Mr. Decoy, charity obliges us to serve our neighbour, I say, when we are no losers by so doing.

Decoy. Very true, indeed.

Ramil. Heyday! what can be the meaning of this? our broker talking with the old gentleman!

Decoy. So gentlemen! I see you are in great haste; but who told you, pray, that this was the lender? I assure you, Sir, I neither discovered your name, nor your house; but, however, there is no great harm done: they are people of discretion, so you may freely transact the affair now.

Love. How!

Decoy. This, Sir, is the gentleman that wants to borrow the five hundred pounds I mentioned to you.

Love. How! rascal, is it you that abandon yourself to these intolerable extravagancies?

Fred. I must even stand buff, and out-face him. [*Aside.*] — And is it you, father, that disgrace yourself by these scandalous extortions?

[*Ramilie and Decoy sneak off.*]

Love. Is it you that would ruin yourself, by taking up money at such interest?

Fred. Is it you that would enrich yourself, by lending at such interest?

Love. How dare you, after this, appear before my face?

Fred. How dare you, after this, appear before the face of the world?

Love. Get you out of my sight, villain, get out of my sight!

Fred. Sir, I go; but give me leave to say —

Love. I'll not hear a word. I'll prevent your attempting any thing of this nature for the future. — Get out of my sight, villain. — I am not sorry for this

this accident: it will make me henceforth keep a stricter eye over his actions. [Exit.]

SCENE an Apartment in Lovegold's House.
Harriet and Mariana.

Mar. Nay, Harriet, you must excuse me; for of all people upon earth you are my greatest favourite: but I have had such an intolerable cold, child, that it is a miracle I have recovered; for my dear, wou'd you think, I have had no less than three doctors?

Har. Nay, then it is a miracle you recover'd, indeed!

Mar. O child, doctors will never do me any harm: I never take any thing they prescribe: I don't know how it is, when one's ill one can't help sending for them; and you know, my dear, my mama loves physick better than she does any thing but cards.

Har. Were I to take as much of cards as you do, I don't know which I shou'd nauseate most.

Mar. O child, you are quite a tramontane: I must bring you to like dear spadille. I protest, Harriet, if you wou'd take my advice in some things, you wou'd be the most agreeable creature in the world.

Har. Nay, my dear, I am in a fair way of being obliged to obey your commands.

Mar. That wou'd be the happiest thing in the world for you; and I dare swear you wou'd like them extremely, for they wou'd be exactly opposite to every command of your father's.

Har. By that now, one would think you were married already.

Mar. Married, my dear!

Har. Oh, I can tell you of such a conquest! you will have such a lover, within these four-and-twenty hours!

Mar. I am glad you have given me timely notice of it, that I may turn off somebody to make room for him; but I believe I have liked him already. O Harriet! I have been so plagu'd, so pester'd, so fatigu'd, since I saw you, with that dear creature your brother——In short, child, he has made arrant downright love to me: if my heart had not been harder than adamant itself, I had been your sister by this time.

Har.

Har. And if your heart be not harder than adamant, you will be in a fair way of being my mother shortly; for my good father has this very day declared such a passion for you——

Mar. Your father!

Har. Ay, my dear. What say you to a comely old gentleman, of not much above threescore, that loves you so violently? I dare swear he will be constant to you all his days.

Mar. Ha, ha, ha! I shall die. Ha, ha, ha! you extravagant creature, how could you throw away all this jest at once? it would have furnished a prudent person with an annuity of laughter for life. Oh! I am charm'd with my conquest; I am quite in love with him already. I never had a lover yet above half his age.

Har. Lappet and I have laid a delightful plot, if you will but come into it, and counterfeit an affection for him.

Mar. Why, child, I have a real affection for him: Oh! methinks I see you on your knees already—— pray, mama, please to give me your blessing. Oh! I see my loving bridegroom 'in his three-fold night-cap, 'his flannel shirt;' methinks I see him approach me with all the lovely gravity of age: I hear him whisper charming sentences of morality in my ear, 'more instructive than all my grandmother e'er taught me.' Oh! I smell him sweeter, oh! sweeter than even hartshorn itself. Ha, ha, ha! see, child, how beautiful a fond imagination can paint a lover: 'would not any one think now we had been a happy couple together, 'Heaven knows how long?'

Har. Well, you dear mad creature, but do you think you can maintain any of this fondness to his face? for I know some women, who speak very fondly of a husband to other people, but never say one civil thing to the man himself.

Mar. Oh! never fear it; one can't indeed bring one's self to be civil to a young lover; but as for these old fellows, I think one may play as harmlessly with them as with one another. Young fellows are perfect bears, and must be kept at a distance; the old ones are mere lap-dogs, and when they have agreeable tricks with them, one is equally fond of both.

Mar.

Mar. Well, but now I hope you will give me leave to speak a word or two seriously in favour of my poor brother.

Mar. Oh! I shall hate you if you are serious: ahh! see what your wicked words have occasioned: I protest you are a conjurer, and certainly deal with the Devil.

Enter Frederick.

Har. O brother! I am glad you are come to plead your own cause: I have been your solicitor in your absence.

Fred. I am afraid, like other clients, I shall plead much worse for myself, than my advocate has done.

Mar. Persons, who have a bad cause, should have very artful council.

Fred. When the judge is determin'd against us all, art will prove of no effect.

Mar. Why then, truly, Sir, in so terrible a situation, I think the sooner you give up the cause the better.

Fred. No, Madam, I am resolved to persevere; for, when one's whole happiness is already at stake, I see nothing more can be hazarded in the pursuit. It might be perhaps a person's interest to give up a cause, wherein part of his fortune was concern'd; but when the dispute is about the whole, he can never lose by persevering.

Mar. Do you hear him, Harriet? I fancy this brother of yours would have made a most excellent lawyer. I protest, when he is my son-in-law, I'll e'en send him to the Temple: tho' he begins a little late, yet diligence may bring him to be a great man.

Fred. I hope, Madam, diligence may succeed in love, as well as law: sure Mariana is not a more crabbed study than Coke upon Littleton.

Mar. Oh! the wretch; he has quite suffocated me with his comparison: I must have a little air: dear Harriet, let us walk in the garden.

Fred. I hope, Madam, I have your leave to attend you?

Mar. My leave! no indeed, you have no leave of mine; but if you will follow me, I know no way to hinder you. *[Exeunt.]*

Har.

'vitals, to ask him for a farthing:' but here he is, and if you get a shilling out of him, I'll marry you without any other fortune. [Exit Ram.]

Enter Lovegold.

Love. All's well hitherto: my dear money is safe. Is it you, Lappet?

Lap. I should rather ask if it be you, Sir: why, you look so young and vigorous——

Love. Do I, do I?

Lap. Why you grow younger and younger every day, Sir; you never look'd half so young in your life, Sir, as you do now. Why, Sir, I know fifty young fellows of five and twenty, that are older than you are.

Love. That may be, that may be, Lappet, considering the lives they lead; and yet I am a good ten years above fifty.

Lap. Well, and what's ten years above fifty? 'tis the very flower of a man's age. Why, Sir, you are now in the very prime of your life.

Love. Very true, that's very true, as to understanding; but I am afraid, cou'd I take off twenty years, it would do me no harm with the ladies, Lappet. How goes on our affair with Mariana? Have you mention'd any thing about what her mother can give her? For now-a-days no body marries a woman unless she brings something with her besides a petticoat.

Lap. Sir! why, Sir, this young lady will be worth to you as good a thousand pound a year as ever was told.

Love. How! a thousand pound a year!

Lap. Yes, Sir: there is in the first place the article of a table: she has a very little stomach, she does not eat above an ounce in a fortnight; and then, as to the quality of what she eats, you'll have no need of a French cook upon her account; as for sweet-meats, she mortally hates them: so there is the article of deserts wiped off all at once—you'll have no need of a confectioner, who wou'd be eternally bringing in bills for preserves, conserves, biscuits, comfits, and jellies, of which half a dozen ladies wou'd swallow you ten pounds worth at a meal: this, I think, we may very moderately reckon at two hundred pounds a year at least. Item, for clothes:

she

she has been bred up in such a plainness in them, that shou'd we allow but for three birth-night suits a year sav'd, which are the least a town-lady wou'd expect, there go a good two hundred pounds a year more: for jewels (of which she hates the very sight) the yearly interest of what you must lay out in them wou'd amount to one hundred pounds. Lastly, she has an utter detestation for play, at which I have known several moderate ladies lose a good two thousand pounds a year: now let us take only the fourth part of that, which amounts to five hundred; to which, if we add two hundred pounds on the table account, two hundred pounds in clothes, and one hundred pounds in jewels, there is, Sir, your thousand pounds a year in hard money.

Love. Ay, ay, these are pretty things, it must be confess'd; very pretty things; but there's nothing real in 'em.

Lap. How, Sir! is it not something real, to bring you in marriage a vast store of sobriety, the inheritance of a great love for simplicity of dress, and a vast acquired fund of hatred for play?

Love. This is downright raillery, Lappet, to make me up a fortune out of the expences she won't put me to: I assure you, Madam, I shall give no acquittance for what I have not received: in short, Lappet, I must touch, touch, touch something real.

Lap. Never fear, you shall touch something real: I have heard them talk of a certain country, where she has a very pretty freehold, which shall be put into your hands.

Love. Nay, if it were a copyhold, I should be glad to touch it; but there is another thing that disturbs me. You know this girl is young, and young people generally love one another's company: it would ill agree with a person of my temper to keep an assembly for all the young rakes and flaunting girls in town.

Lap. Ah, Sir! how little do you know of her! this is another particularity that I had to tell you of; she has a most terrible aversion for all young people, and loves none but persons of your years. I would advise you, above all things, to take care not to appear too young; she insists on fixty at least: "*why she broke off a match*

“ i’other day because her lover was but fifty, and pretended to sign the marriage articles without spectacles.”

Love. This humour is a little strange, methinks.

Lap. She carries it farther, Sir, than can be imagin’d: she has in her chamber several pictures; but, what do you think they are? none of your smock-fac’d young fellows, your Adonis’s, your Cephalus’s, your Paris’s, and your Apollo’s. No, Sir, you see nothing there but your handsome figures of Saturn, king Priam, old Nestor, and good father Anchises upon his son’s shoulders.

Love. Admirable! this is more than I could have hoped. To say the truth, had I been a woman, I shou’d never have lov’d young fellows.

Lap. I believe you. Pretty sort of stuff indeed, to be in love with your young fellows! pretty masters, indeed, with their fine complexions, and their fine feathers! now, I should be glad to taste the favour that is in any of them.

“ A S O N G.”

Love. And do you really think me pretty tolerable?

Lap. Tolerable! you are ravishing! if your picture was drawn by a good hand, Sir, it would be invaluable! turn about a little, if you please: there, what can be more charming? let me see you walk: there’s a person for you, tall, straight, free and degagé! why, Sir, you have no fault about you.

Love. Not many; hem, hem; not many, I thank Heaven; only a few rheumatic pains now and then, and a small catarrh, that seizes me sometimes.

Lap. Ay, Sir, that’s nothing: your catarrh fits very well upon you, and you cough with a very good grace.

Love. But tell me, what does Mariana say of my person?

Lap. She has a particular pleasure in talking of it; and I assure you, Sir, I have not been backward on all such occasions to blazon forth your merit, and to make her sensible how advantageous the match you will be to her.

Love. You did very well, and I am obliged to you.

Lap. But, Sir, I have a small favour to ask of you:— I have a law-suit depending, which I am on the very
brink

brink of losing for want of a little money: [*He looks gravely.*] And you could easily procure my success, if you had the least friendship for me. You can't imagine, Sir, the pleasure she takes in talking of you. [*He looks pleas'd.*]—Ah! how you will delight her; how your venerable mien will charm her! She will never be able to withstand you. —But indeed, Sir, this law-suit will be of a terrible consequence to me. [*He looks grave again.*] I am ruined, if I lose it, which a very small matter might prevent. Ah! Sir, had you but seen the raptures with which she has heard me talk of you! [*He resumes his gaiety.*] How pleasure sparkled in her eyes at the recital of your good qualities. In short, to discover a secret to you, which I promised to conceal, I have worked up her imagination, till she is downright impatient of having the match concluded.

Love. Lappet, you have acted a very friendly part; and I own that I have all the obligations in the world to you.

Lap. I beg you would give me this little assistance, Sir. [*He looks serious.*] It will set me on my feet, and I shall be eternally obliged to you.

Love. Farewell, I'll go and finish my dispatches.

Lap. I assure you, Sir, you cou'd never assist me in a greater necessity.

Love. I must go give some orders about a particular affair.

Lap. I would not importune you, Sir, if I was not forc'd by the last extremity.

Love. I expect the taylor about turning my coat. Don't you think this coat will look well enough turn'd, and with new buttons, for a wedding-suit?

Lap. For pity's sake, Sir, don't refuse me this small favour: I shall be undone, indeed, Sir. If it were but so small a matter as ten pounds, Sir.

Love. I think I hear the taylor's voice.

Lap. If it were but five pound, Sir; but three pound, Sir; nay, Sir, a single guinea would be of service for a day or two. [*As he offers to go out on either side, she intercepts him.*]

Love. I must go; I can't stay. Hark there, somebody calls me. I'm very much oblig'd to you; indeed I am very much oblig'd to you.

[*Exit.*]

Lap.

Lap. Go to the gallows, to the devil, like a covetous good-for-nothing villain, as you are! Ramilie is in the right: however, I shall not quit the affair; for tho' I get nothing out of him, I am sure of my reward from the other side.

*Fools only to one party will confide,
Good politicians will both parties guide,
And, if one fails, they're feed on t'other side.*

}
[Exit.

A C T III. S C E N E continues.

Harriet, Frederick, and Clermont.

Fred. I Think, Sir, you have given my sister a very substantial proof of your affection. I am sorry you could have had such a suspicion of me, as to imagine I could have been an enemy to one who has approv'd himself a gentleman and a lover.

Cler. If any thing, Sir, could add to my misfortunes, it would be to be thus oblig'd, withou having any prospect of repaying the obligation.

Fred. Every word you speak is a farther conviction to me, that you are what you have declar'd yourself; 'for there is something in a generous education, which it is impossible for persons who want that happiness to counterfeit:' therefore henceforth I beg you to believe me sincerely your friend.

Har. Come, come, pray a truce with your compliments; for I hear my father's cough coming this way.

Enter Lovegold.

Love. So, so, this is just as I would have it. Let me tell you, children, this is a prudent young man, and you cannot converse too much with him. He will teach you, Sir, for all you hold your head so high, better sense than to borrow money at 50 per cent. And you, Madam, I dare say, he will infuse good things into you too, if you will but hearken to him.

Fred. While you live, Sir, we shall want no other instructor.

Love.

Love. Come hither, Harriet. You know to-night I have invited our friend and neighbour Mr. Spindle. Now I intend to take this opportunity of saving the expence of another entertainment, by inviting Mariana and her mother; for I observe, that take what care one will, there is always more victuals provided on these occasions than is eat; and an additional guest makes no additional expence.

Cler. Very true, Sir; besides, tho' they were to rise hungry, no one ever calls for more at another person's table.

Love. Right, honest Clermont, and to rise with an appetite is one of the wholesomest things in the world. Harriet, I would have you go immediately, and carry the invitation: you may walk thither, and they will bring you back in a coach.

Har. I shall obey you, Sir. [Exit.]

Love. Go, that's my good girl. And you, Sir, I desire you would behave yourself civilly at supper.

Fred. Why should you suspect me, Sir?

Love. I know, Sir, with what eyes such sparks as you look upon a mother-in-law; but if you hope for my forgiveness of your late exploit, I would advise you to behave to her in the most affectionate manner imaginable.

Fred. I cannot promise, Sir, to be overjoy'd at her being my mother-in-law; but this I will promise you, I will be as civil to her as you could wish. I will behold her with as much affection as you can desire me: that is an article upon which you may be sure of a most punctual obedience.

Love. That, I think, is the least I can expect.

Fred. Sir, you shall have no reason to complain.

Enter James.

James. Did you send for me, Sir?

Love. Where have you been? for I have wanted you above an hour.

James. Who, Sir, did you want? your coachman, or your cook? for I am both one and t'other.

Love. I want my cook, Sir.

James. I thought, indeed, it was not your coachman; for you have had no great occasion for him since your

last pair of geldings were starv'd—But your cook, Sir, shall wait on you in an instant.

- [*Puts off his coachman's great coat, and appears as a cook.*

Love. What's the meaning of this folly?

James. I am ready for your commands, Sir.

Love. I am engaged this evening to give a supper.

James. A supper, Sir! I have not heard the word this half year. I have indeed now and then heard of such a thing as a dinner; but for a supper, I have not dress'd one so long that I am afraid my hand is out.

Love. Leave off your saucy jesting, firrah, and see that you provide me a good supper.

James. That may be done, Sir, with a good deal of money.

Love. What is the devil in you? Always money! Can you say nothing else but money, money, money? All my servants, my children, my relations, can pronounce no other word than money.

Cler. I never heard so ridiculous an answer. 'Here's a miracle for you indeed, to make a good supper with a good deal of money! Is there any thing so easy? Is there any one who can't do it?' Wou'd a man shew himself to be a good cook, he must make a good supper out of a little money.

James. I wish you wou'd be so good, Sir, as to shew us that art, and take my office of cook upon yourself.

Love. Peace, firrah, and tell me what we can have.

James. There's a gentleman, Sir, who can furnish you out a good supper with a little money.

Love. Answer me yourself.

James. 'Why, Sir,' how many will there be at table?

Love. About eight or ten; but I will have a supper dress'd but for eight: for if there be enough for eight, there is enough for ten.

James. Suppose, Sir, you have at one end of the table a good handsome soup; at the other a fine Westphalia ham and chickens; on one side a fillet of veal roasted; and on the other a turkey, or rather a bustard, which, I believe, may be bought for a guinea, or thereabouts.

Love. What, is the fellow providing an entertainment for my lord mayor and the court of aldermen?

James. Then, Sir, for the second course, a leash of pheasants,

pheasants, a leash of fat poulards, half a dozen partridges, one dozen of quails, two dozen of ortolans, three dozen——

Love. [Putting his hand before James's mouth.] Ah, villain! you are eating up all I am worth!

James. Then a ragout——

Love. [Stopping his mouth again.] Hold your extravagant tongue, firrah!

Cler. Have you a mind to burst them all? 'Has my master invited people to cram 'em to death? or do you think his friends have a mind to eat him up at one supper?' Such servants as you, Mr. James, should be often reminded of that excellent saying of a very wise man, *We must eat to live, and not live to eat.*

Love. Excellently well said, indeed! it is the finest sentence I ever heard in my life. *We must live to eat, and not eat to* —— No, that is not it: how did you say?

Cler. *That we must eat to live, and not live to eat.*

Love. Extremely fine! Pray write them out for me: for I'm resolv'd to have 'em done in letters of gold, or black and white rather, over my hall chimney.

James. You have no need to do any more, Sir; people talk enough of you already.

Love. Pray, Sir, what do people say of me?

James. Ah, Sir, if I could but be assur'd that you would not be angry with me——

Love. Not at all: so far from it, you will very much oblige me; for I am always very glad to hear what the world says of me.

James. Well, Sir, then since you will have it, I will tell you freely, that they make a jest of you every where; nay, of your very servants, upon your account. They make ten thousand stories of you: one says, that you have always a quarrel ready with your servants at quarter day, or when they leave you, in order to find an excuse to give them nothing. Another says, that you were taken one night stealing your own oats from your own horses; for which your coachman very handsomely belabour'd your back. In a word, Sir, one can go no where, where you are not the bye-word: you are the laughing-stock of all the world; and you are never

mentioned but by the names of covetous, scraping, stingy——

Love. Impertinent, impudent rascal! Beat him for me, Clermont.

Cler. Are not you asham'd, Mr. James, to give your master this language?

James. What's that to you, Sir? —— I fancy this fellow's a coward; if he be, I will handle him.' [*Aside.*

Cler. It does not become a servant to use such language to his master.

James. Who taught you, Sir, what becomes? If you trouble your head with my business, I shall thresh your jacket for you. If I once take a stick in hand, I shall teach you to hold your tongue for the future, I believe. If you offer to say another word to me, I'll break your head for you.

[*Drives Clermont to the farther end of the stage.*

Cler. How, rascal! break my head!

James. I did not say, I'd break your head.

[*Clermont drives him back again.*

Cler. Do you know, Sirrah, that I shall break yours for this impudence?

James. I hope not, Sir: I give you no offence, Sir.

Cler. That I shall shew you the difference between us.'

James. Ha, ha, ha! Sir, I was but in jest.

Cler. Then I shall warn you to forbear these jests for the future.

[*Kicks him off the stage.*

James. Nay, Sir, can't you take a jest? Why, I was but in jest all the while.

Love. How happy am I in such a clerk!

Cler. You may leave the ordering of the supper to me, Sir: I will take care of that.

Love. Do so: see and provide something to cloy their stomachs: let there be two great dishes of soup-meagre, a good large suet-pudding, some dainty fat pork-pye or pasty, a fine small breast of mutton, not too fat; a salad, and a dish of artichokes, which will make plenty and variety enough.

Cler. I shall take a particular care, Sir, to provide every thing to your satisfaction.

Love. But be sure there be plenty of soup, be sure of that. —— This is a most excellent young fellow! —— but now will I go pay a visit to my money.

[*Exeunt.*

S C E N E

S C E N E *the Street.**Ramilie and Lappet meeting.*

Ramil. Well, Madam, what success? 'Have I been
' a false prophet, and have you come at the old hunk's
' purse? or have I spoke like an oracle, and is he as
' close-fisted as usual?'

Lap. Never was a person of my function so used. All
my rhetoric availed nothing: while I was talking to
him about the lady, he smil'd and was pleas'd; but the
moment I mentioned money to him, his countenance
chang'd, and he understood not one word that I said.
But now, Ramilie, what do you think this affair is that
I am transacting?

Ramil. Nay, Mrs. Lappet, now you are putting too
severe a task upon me. How is it possible in the vast
variety of affairs which you honour with taking into
your hands, that I should be able to guess which is so
happy to employ your immediate thoughts?

Lap. Let me tell you then, sweet Sir, that I am trans-
acting an affair between your master's mistress and his
father.

Ramil. What affair, pr'ythee?

Lap. What should it be but the old one, matrimony?
In short, your master and his father are rivals.

Ramil. I am glad on't; and I wish the old gentleman
success, with all my heart.

Lap. How! are you your master's enemy?

Ramil. No, Madam, I am so much his friend, that I
had rather he should lose his mistress than his humble
servant, which must be the case: for I am determin'd
against a married family. I will never be servant to any
man who is not his own master.

Lap. Why truly, when one considers the case tho-
roughly, I must be of opinion, that it would be more
your master's interest to be this lady's son-in-law than
her husband: for, in the first place, she has but lit-
tle fortune; and if she was once married to his son, I
dare swear the old gentleman would never forgive the
disappointment of his love.

Ramil. And is the old gentleman in love?

Lap. Oh, profoundly! delightfully! Oh that you had
but seen him as I have! with his feet tottering, his eyes
watering,

watering, his teeth chattering! His old trunk was shaken with a fit of love, just as if it had been a fit of an ague.

Ramil. He will have more cold fits than hot, I believe.

Lap. Is it not more advantageous for him to have a mother-in-law that should open his father's heart to him, than a wife that should shut it against him? Besides, it will be the better for us all; for if the husband were as covetous as the devil, he could not stop the hands of an extravagant wife. She will always have it in her power to reward those who keep her secrets; and when the husband is old enough to be the wife's grandfather, she has always secrets that are worth concealing, take my word for it: so, faith, I will e'en set about that in earnest, which I have hitherto intended only as a jest.

Ramil. But do you think you can prevail with her? Will she not be apt to think she loses that by the exchange, which he cannot make her amends for?

Lap. Ah, Ramilie! The difficulty is not so great to persuade a woman to follow her interest. We generally have that more at heart than you men imagine; besides, we are extremely apt to listen to one another; and whether you would lead a woman to ruin, or preserve her from it, the surest way of doing either is by one of her own sex. We are generally decoy'd into the net by birds of our own feathers.

Ramil. Well, if you do succeed in your undertaking, you will allow this, I hope, that I first put it into your head.

Lap. Yes, it is true you did mention it first; but I thought of it first I am sure; I must have thought of it: but I will not lose a moment's time: for, notwithstanding all I have said, young fellows are devils. Besides, this has a most plausible tongue, and, should he get access to Mariana, may do in a few minutes what I shall never be able to undo as long as I live. [Exit.]

Ramil. There goes the glory of all chambermaids. The jade has art, but it is quite overshadow'd by her vanity. She will get the better of every one but the person who will condescend to praise her; for, tho' she be a most mercenary devil, she will swallow no
bribe

‘bribe half so eagerly as flattery. The same pride
 ‘which warms her fancy, serves to cool her appetites;
 ‘and therefore, though she has neither virtue nor
 ‘beauty, her vanity gives her both. And this is my
 ‘mistress, with a pox to her. Pray, what am I in love
 ‘with? But that is a question so few lovers can answer,
 ‘that I shall content myself with thinking I am in love
 ‘with *le je ne sçai quoi*.’ “*Match her who can.* [Exit.”]

S C E N E Lovegold's House.

Lovegold, Frederick, Harriet, Mrs. Wisely, and
 Mariana.

Love. You see, Madam, what it is to marry extremely young. Here are a couple of tall branches for you, almost the age of man and woman: but ill weeds grow apace.

Mrs. Wise. When children come to their age, Mr. Lovegold, they are no longer any trouble to their parents: what I have always dreaded was to have married into a family where there were small children.

Love. Pray give me leave, young lady: I have been told you have no great aversion to spectacles: it is not that your charms do not sufficiently strike the naked eye, or that they want addition; but it is with glasses we look at the stars, and I'll maintain you are a star of beauty that is the finest, brightest, and most glorious of all stars.

Mar. Harriet, I shall certainly burst: Oh! nauseous, filthy fellow! [Aside.]

Love. What does she say to you, Harriet?

Har. She says, Sir, if she were a star, you should be sure of her kindest influence.

Love. How can I return this great honour you do me?

Mar. Augh! what an animal! what a wretch! [Aside.]

Love. How vastly am I obliged to you for these kind sentiments!

Mar. I shall never be able to hold it out, unless you keep him at a greater distance. [Aside to Harriet.]

Love. [Listening.] I shall make them both keep their distance, Madam. Harkee, you Mr. Spendall, why don't you come and make this lady some acknowledgment for the great honour she does your father?

Fred.

Fred. My father has indeed, Madam, much reason to be vain of his choice. You will be, doubtless, a very great honour to our family. Notwithstanding which, I cannot dissemble my real sentiments so far, as to counterfeit any joy I shall have in the name of son-in-law; nor can I help saying, that if it were in my power, I believe I should make no scruple of preventing the match.

Mar. I believe it, indeed: were they to ask the leave of their children, few parents would marry twice.

Love. Why, you ill-bred blockhead, is that the compliment you make your mother-in-law?

Fred. Well, Sir, since you will have me talk in another style—Suffer, me, Madam, to put myself in the place of my father; and believe me, when I swear to you I never saw any one half so charming; that I can imagine no happiness equal to that of pleasing you; that, to be called your husband, would be to my ears a title more blest, more glorious, than that of the greatest of princes. ‘The possession of you is the most valuable gift in the power of Fortune. That is the lovely mark to which all my ambition tends; there is nothing which I am not capable of undertaking to attain so great a blessing: all difficulties, when you are the prize in pursuit—’

Love. Hold! hold! Sir! softly if you please.

Fred. I am only saying a few civil things, Sir, for you to this lady.

Love. Your humble servant, Sir: I have a tongue to say civil things with myself. I have no need of such an interpreter as you are, sweet Sir!

Mar. If your father could not speak better for himself than his son can for him, I am afraid he would meet with little success.

Love. I don’t ask you, ladies, to drink any wine before supper, lest it should spoil your stomachs.

Fred. I have taken the liberty to order some sweetmeats, Sir, and Tokay, in the next room: I hope the ladies will excuse what is wanting.

Mrs. Wife. There was no necessity for such a collation.

Fred. [To Mariana.] Did you ever see, Madam, so fine a brilliant as that on my father’s finger?

Mar.

Mar. It seems, indeed, to be a very fine one.

Fred. You cannot judge of it, Madam, unless you were to see it nearer. If you will give me leave, Sir, [*Takes it from off his Father's finger, and gives it to Mariana.*] There is no seeing a jewel while it is on the finger.

Mrs. Wife. } It is really a prodigious fine one.
Mar.

Fred. [*Preventing Mariana, who is going to return it.*] No, Madam, it is already in the best hands. My father, Madam, intends it as a present to you; therefore, I hope you will accept it.

Love. Present! I!

Fred. Is it not, Sir, your request to this lady, that she should wear this bauble for your sake?

Love. [*To his son.*] Is the devil in you?

Fred. He makes signs to me, that I would intreat you to accept it.

Mar. I shall not, upon my word.

Fred. He will not receive it again.

Love. I shall run stark staring mad.

Mar. I must insist on returning it.

Fred. It would be cruel in you to refuse him; let me intreat you, Madam, not to shock my poor father to such a degree.

Mrs. Wife. It is ill-breeding, child, to refuse so often.

Love. Oh! that the devil would but fly away with this fellow!

Fred. See, Madam, what agonies he is in, lest you should return it. — It is not my fault, dear Sir; I do all I can to prevail with her—but she is obstinate— For pity's sake, Madam, keep it.

Love. [*To his son.*] Infernal villain!

Fred. My father will never forgive me, Madam, unless I succeed: on my knees I intreat you.

Love. The cut-throat!

Mrs. Wife. Daughter, I protest you make me ashamed of you: come, come, put up the ring, since Mr. Love-gold is so uneasy about it.

Mar. Your commands, Madam, always determine me, and I shall refuse no longer.

Love. I shall be undone: I wish I was buried while I have one farthing left.

Enter James.

James. Sir, there is a man at the door who desires to speak with you.

Love. Tell him I am busy—bid him come another time—bid him leave his business with you.

James. Must he leave the money he has brought with me, Sir?

Love. No, no, stay——tell him I come this instant. I ask pardon, ladies, I'll wait on you again immediately. *[Exit.]*

Fred. Will you please, ladies, to walk into the next room, and taste the collation I was mentioning?

Mar. I have eat too much fruit already this afternoon.

Mrs. Wife. Really, Sir, this is an unnecessary trouble; but, since the Tokay is provided, I will taste one glass.

Har. I'll wait on you, Madam.

[Exeunt Mrs. Wisely and Harriet.]

Mar. That is a mighty pretty picture over the door, Harriet. Is it a family-piece, my dear? I think it has a great deal of you in it. Are not you generally thought very like it? — Hey-day! where is my mama and your sister gone?

Fred. They thought, Madam, we might have some business together, and so were willing to leave us alone.

Mar. Did they so? But as we happen to have no business together, we may as well follow them.

Fred. When a lover has no other obstacles to surmount, but those his mistress throws in his way, she is in the right not to become too easy a conquest; but were you as kind as I could wish, my father would still prove a sufficient bar to our happiness; therefore it is a double cruelty in you.

Mar. Our happiness! how came your happiness and mine to depend so on one another, pray? 'when that of the mother and son-in-law are usually so very opposite.'

Fred.

Fred. This is keeping up the play behind the curtain. Your kindness to him comes from the same spring, as your cruelty to me.

Mar. Modest enough! Then, I suppose, you think both fictitious.

Fred. Faith, to be sincere, I do. Without arrogance, I think I have nothing in me so detestable, as should make you deaf to all I say, or blind to all I suffer. This I am certain, there is nothing in him so charming, as to captivate a woman of your sense in a moment.

Mar. You are mistaken, Sir: money, money, the most charming of all things; money, which will say more in one moment than the most eloquent lover can in years. Perhaps you will say a man is not young; I answer, he is rich: he is not genteel, handsome, witty, brave, good-humoured; but he is rich, rich, rich, rich, rich—that one word contradicts every thing you can say against him; and if you were to praise a person for a whole hour, and end with, *But he is poor*, you overthrow all you have said; for it has long been an established maxim, that he who is rich can have no vice, and he that is poor can have no virtue.

Fred. These principles are foreign to the real sentiments of Mariana's heart. I vow, did you but know how ill a counterfeit you are, how awkwardly ill-nature fits upon you, you'd never wear it. There is not one so abandon'd, but that she can affect what is amiable, better than you can what is odious. Nature has painted in you the complexion of Virtue in such lively colours, that nothing but what is lovely can suit you, or appear your own.

Enter Harriet.

Har. I left your mama, Mariana, with Mr. Clermont, who is shewing her some pictures in the gallery. Well, have you told him?

Mar. Told him what?

Har. Why, what you told me this afternoon, that you lov'd him.

Mar. I tell you I lov'd him! — O barbarous falsehood!

Fred.

Fred. Did you? could you say so? Oh! repeat it to my face, and make me bless'd to that degree!

Har. Repeat it to him, can't you? How can you be so ill-natur'd to conceal any thing from another, which would make him happy to know?

Mar. The lye would choke me, were I to say so.

Har. Indeed, my dear, you have said you hated him so often, that you need not fear that. But, if she will not discover it to you herself, take my word for it, brother, she is your own without any possibility of losing. She is full as fond of you as you are of her. I hate this peevish, foolish coyness in women, who will suffer a worthy lover to languish and despair, when they need only put themselves to the pain of telling truth to make him easy.

Mar. Give me leave to tell you, Miss Harriet, this is a treatment I did not expect from you, especially in your own house, Madam. I did not imagine I was invited hither to be betray'd, and that you had entered into a plot with your brother against my reputation.

Har. We form a plot against your reputation! I wish you could see, my dear, how prettily these airs become you.—Take my word for it, you would have no reason to be in love with your fancy.

Mar. I should indeed have no reason to be in love with my fancy if it were fix'd where you have insinuated it.

Har. If you have any reason, Madam, to be ashamed of your choice, it is from denying it. My brother is every way worthy of you, Madam; and give me leave to tell you, if I can prevent it, you shall not render him as ridiculous to the town, as you have some other of your admirers.

Fred. Dear Harriet, carry it no farther: you will ruin me for ever with her.

Har. Away, you do not know the sex. Her vanity will make you play the fool till she despises you, and then contempt will destroy her affection for you.—It is a part she has often play'd.

Mar. I am obliged to you however, Madam, for the lesson

lesson you have given me, how far I may depend on a woman's friendship. It will be my own fault, if ever I am deceiv'd hereafter.

Har. My friendship, Madam, naturally cools, when I discover its object less worthy than I imagin'd her.—I can never have any violent esteem for one, who would make herself unhappy, to make the person who dotes on her more so: the ridiculous custom of the world is a poor excuse for such a behaviour. And, in my opinion, the coquette, who sacrifices the ease and reputation of as many as she is able, to an ill-natur'd vanity, is a more odious, I am sure she is a more pernicious creature, than the wretch whom fondness betrays to make her lover happy at the expence of her own reputation.

Enter Mrs. Wisely and Clermont.

Mrs. Wise. Upon my word, Sir, you have a most excellent taste for pictures.

Mar. I can bear this no longer: if you had been base enough to have given up all friendship and honour, good-breeding should have restrain'd you from using me after this inhumane, cruel, barbarous manner!

Mrs. Wise. Bless me! child, what's the matter?

Har. Let me intreat you, Mariana, not to expose yourself: you have nothing to complain of on his side; and therefore, pray let the whole be a secret.

Mar. A secret! no, Madam: the whole world shall know how I have been treated. I thank Heaven, I have it in my power to be reveng'd on you; and if I am not reveng'd on you——

Fred. See, sister, was I not in the right? did I not tell you, you would ruin me? and now you have done it.

Har. Courage! all will go well yet. You must not be frighten'd at a few storms. These are only blasts, that carry a lover to his harbour.

Enter Lovegold.

Love. I ask your pardon: I have dispatch'd my business with all possible haste.

Mrs.

Mrs. Wife. I did not expect, Mr. Lovegold, when we were invited hither, that your children intended to affront us.

Love. Has any one affronted you, Madam?

Mrs. Wife. Your children, Sir, have us'd my poor girl so ill, that they have brought tears into her eyes. I can assure you, we are not us'd to be treated in this manner. My daughter is of as good a family——

Love. Out of my sight, audacious, vile wretches, and let me never see you again.

Fred. Sir, I——

Love. I won't hear a word, and I wish I may never hear you more. Was ever such impudence! to dare, after what I have told you——

Har. Come, brother, perhaps I may give you some comfort.

Fred. I fear you have destroy'd it for ever.

[*Exeunt Frederick and Harriet.*]

Love. How shall I make you amends for the rudeness you have suffer'd? Poor, pretty creature! had they stolen my purse, I would almost as soon have pardon'd them!

Mrs. Wife. The age is come to a fine pass, indeed, if children are to controul the wills of their parents. If I would have consented to a second match, I would have been glad to have seen a child of mine oppose it.

Love. Let us be married immediately, my dear; and if after that they ever dare to offend you, they shall stay no longer under my roof.

Mrs. Wife. Lookee, Mariana, I know your consent will appear a little sudden, and not altogether conform to those nice rules of decorum, of which I have been all my life so strict an observer; but this is so prudent a match, that the world will be apt to give you a dispensation. When women seem too forward to run away with idle young fellows, the world is, as it ought to be, very severe on them; but when they only consult their interest in their consent, tho' it be never so quickly given, we say, La! who suspected it? it was mighty privately carried on!

Mar.

Mar. I resign myself intirely over to your will, Madam, and am at your disposal.

Mrs. Wife. Mr. Lovegold, my daughter is a little shy on this occasion: you know your courtship has not been of any long date; but she has considered your great merit, and I believe I may venture to give you her consent.

Love. And shall I? Hey! I begin to find myself the happiest man upon earth. Od! Madam, you shall be a grandmother within these ten months—I am a very young fellow.

Mar. If you were five years younger, I should utterly detest you.

Love. The very creature she was described to be! no one, sure, ever so luckily found a mass of treasure as I have. My pretty sweet, if you will walk a few minutes in the garden, I will wait on you: I must give some necessary orders to my clerk.

Mrs. Wife. We will expect you with impatience.

[*Exeunt Mrs. Wisely and Mariana.*]

Love. Clermont, come hither: you see the disorder my house is like to be in this evening. I must trust every thing to your care: see that matters be managed with as small expence as possible. My extravagant son has sent for fruit, sweetmeats, and tokay. Take care what is not eat or drank be returned to the tradespeople. If you can save a bottle of the wine, let that be sent back too; and put up what is left, if part of a bottle, in a pint: that I will keep for my own drinking when I am sick. Be sure that the servants of my guests be not ask'd to come farther than the hall, for fear some of mine should ask them to eat. I trust every thing to you.

Cler. I shall take all the care possible, Sir. But there is one thing, in this entertainment of yours, which gives me inexpressible pain.

Love. What is that, pr'ythee?

Cler. This is the cause of it. Give me leave, Sir, to be free on this occasion. I am sorry a man of your years and prudence should be prevail'd on to so indiscreet

indiscreet an action, as I fear this marriage will be called.

Love. I know she has not quite so great a fortune as I might expect.

Cler. Has she any fortune, Sir?

Love. Oh! yes, yes: I have been very well assured that her mother is in very good circumstances; and you know she is her only daughter. Besides, she has several qualities that will save a fortune; 'and a penny sav'd 'is a penny got. Since I find I have great occasion 'for a wife, I might have search'd all over this town, 'and not have got one cheaper.'

Cler. Sure, you are in a dream, Sir: she save a fortune!

Love. In the article of a table, at least two hundred pounds a-year.

Cler. Sure, Sir, you do not know——

Love. In clothes, two hundred more——

Cler. There is not, Sir, in the whole town——

Love. In jewels, one hundred; play, five hundred; these have been all prov'd to me; besides all that her mother is worth. In short, I have made a very prudent choice.

Cler. Do but hear me, Sir.

Love. Take a particular care of the family, my good boy. Pray, let there be nothing wasted.

[Exit Lovegold.

Clermont alone.

How vainly do we spend our breath, while passion shuts the ears of those we talk to! 'I thought it impossible for any thing to have surmounted his avarice; 'but I find there is one little passion, which reigns 'triumphant in every mind it creeps into; and whether 'a man be covetous, proud, or cowardly, it is in the 'power of woman to make him liberal, humble, and 'brave.' Sure this young lady will not let her fury carry her into the arms of a wretch she despises; but, as she is a coquette, there is no answering for any of her actions. 'I will hasten to acquaint Frederick with 'what I have heard. Poor man! how little satisfaction he finds in his mistress, compared to what I meet 'in

in Harriet? Love to him is misery, to me perfect happiness. Women are always one or the other; they are never indifferent.

*Whoever takes for better and for worse,
Meets with the greatest blessing, or the greatest curse.*

ACT IV. SCENE *a Hall in Lovegold's House.*

Frederick and Ramilie.

Fred. **H**OW! Lappet my enemy! and can she attempt to forward Mariana's marriage with my father?

Ramil. Sir, upon my honour, it is true. She told it me in the highest confidence: a trust, Sir, which nothing, but the inviolable friendship I have for you, could have prevailed with me to have broken.

Fred. Sir, I am your most humble servant: I am infinitely oblig'd to your friendship.

Ram. O Sir; but really I did withstand pretty considerable offers: for, would you think it, Sir, the jade had the impudence to attempt to engage me too in the affair? I believe, Sir, you would have been pleas'd to have heard the answer I gave her: Madam, says I, do you think, if I had no more honour, I should have no greater regard to my interest? It is my interest, Madam, says I, to be honest: for my master is a man of that generosity, that liberality, that bounty, that I am sure he will never suffer any servant of his to be a loser by being true to him. No, no, says I; let him alone for rewarding a servant, when he is but once assur'd of his fidelity.

Fred. No demands now, Ramilie: I shall find a time to reward you.

Ramil. That was what I told her, Sir. Do you think, says I, this old rascal, (I ask your pardon, Sir) that this hunk, my master's father, will live for ever? And then, says I, do you think my master will not remember his old friends?

Fred.

Fred. Well, but, dear Sir, let us have no more of your rhetoric—go and fetch Lappet hither. I'll try if I can't bring her over.

Ramil. Bring her over! a fig for her, Sir. I have a plot worth fifty of yours. I'll blow her up with your father. I'll make him believe just the contrary of every word she has told him.

Fred. Can you do that?

Ramil. Never fear it, Sir; I warrant my lyes keep even pace with hers. But, Sir, I have another plot; I don't question but before you sleep, I shall put you in possession of some thousands of your father's money.

Fred. He has done all in his power to provoke me to it; but I am afraid that will be carrying the jest too far.

Ramil. Sir, I will undertake to make it out, that robbing him is a downright meritorious act. Besides, Sir, if you have any qualms of conscience, you may return it him again. Your having possession of it will bring him to any terms.

Fred. Well, well, I believe there is little danger of thy stealing any thing from him: so about the first affair. It is that only which causes my present pain.

Ramil. Fear nothing, Sir, whilst Ramilie is your friend. [Exit.

Enter Clermont.

Fred. If Impudence can give a title to success, I am sure thou hast a good one.

Cler. O Frederick! I have been looking you all over the house. I have news for you, which will give me pain to discover, tho' it is necessary you should know it. In short, Mariana has determined to marry your father this evening.

Fred. How! O Clermont! is it possible? cursed be the politics of my sister: she is the innocent occasion of this. And can Mariana, from a pique to her, throw herself away! Dear Clermont, give me some advice, think on some method by which I may prevent, at least defer, this match; for that moment which gives her to my father will strike a thousand daggers in my heart.

Cler.

Cler. Would I could advise you! but here comes one who is more likely to invent some means for your deliverance.

Fred. Ha! Lappet!

Enter Lappet.

Lap. Hey-day! Mr. Frederick, you stand with your arms across, and look as melancholy as if there was a funeral going on in the house instead of a wedding.

Fred. This wedding, Madam, will prove the occasion of my funeral: I am oblig'd to you for being instrumental to it.

Lap. Why, truly, if you consider the case rightly, I think you are. It will be much more to your interest to——

Fred. Mistress, undo immediately what you have done: prevent this match which you have forwarded, or, by all the devils which inhabit that heart of yours——

Lap. For Heaven's sake, Sir! you do not intend to kill me!

Fred. What could drive your villany to attempt to rob me of the woman I dote on more than life? what could urge thee, when I trusted thee with my passion, when I have paid the most extravagant usury for money to bribe thee to be my friend, what could sway thee to betray me?

Lap. As I hope to be sav'd, Sir, whatever I have done was intended for your service.

Fred. It is in vain to deny it: I know thou hast us'd thy utmost art to persuade my father into this match.

Lap. If I did, Sir, it was all with a view towards your interest: if I have done any thing to prevent your having her, it was because I thought you would do better without her.

Fred. Would'st thou, to save my life, tear out my heart? and dost thou, like an impudent inquisitor, whilst thou art destroying me, assert it is for my own sake?

Lap. Be but appeas'd, Sir, and let me recover out of this terrible fright you have put me into, and I will engage to make you easy yet.

Cler. Dear Frederick, adjourn your anger for a while at least: I am sure Mrs. Lappet is not your enemy in
C her

her heart, 'and whatever she has done, if it has not been for your sake, this I dare confidently affirm, it has been for her own.' And I have so good an opinion of her, that the moment you shew her it will be more her interest to serve you, than to oppose you, you may be secure of her friendship.

Fred. But has she not already carried it beyond retrieval?

Lap. Alas, Sir! I never did any thing yet so effectually, but that I have been capable of undoing it; nor have I ever said any thing so positively, but that I have been able as positively to unsay it again. As for truth, I have neglected it so long, that I often forget which side of the question it is of. Besides, I look upon it to be so very insignificant towards success, that I am indifferent whether it is for me or against me.

Fred. Let me intreat you, dear Madam, to lose no time in informing us of your many excellent qualities; but consider how very precious our time is, since the marriage is intended this very evening.

Lap. That cannot be.

Cler. My own ears were witnesses to her consent.

Lap. That, indeed, may be—but for the marriage it cannot be, nor shall it be.

Fred. How! how will you prevent it?

Lap. By an infallible rule I have. But, Sir, Mr. Clermont was mentioning a certain little word called interest, just now. I should not repeat it to you, Sir, but that really one goes about a thing with so much a better will, and one has so much better luck in it too, when one has got some little matter by it.

Fred. Here, take all the money I have in my pocket, and on my marriage with Mariana, thou shalt have fifty more.

Lap. That is enough, Sir: if they were half married already, I would unmarry them again. I am impatient till I am about it.—— Oh! there is nothing like gold to quicken a woman's capacity. [*Exit Lappet.*]

Fred. Dost thou think I may place any confidence in what this woman says?

Cler. Faith! I think so. I have told you how dexterously she manag'd my affairs. I have seen such proofs of her capacity, that I am much easier on your account than I was.

Fred.

Fred. My own heart is somewhat lighter too. O Clermont! how dearly do we buy all the joys which we receive from women!

Cler. A coquette's lover generally pays very severely, indeed. His game is sure to lead him a long chace, and if he catches her at last, she is hardly worth carrying home ——— You will excuse me.

Fred. It does not affect me; for what appears a coquette in Mariana is rather the effect of sprightliness and youth, than any fix'd habit of mind: she has good-sense and good-nature at the bottom.

Cler. If she has good-nature, it is at the bottom indeed! for I think she has never discover'd any to you.

Fred. Women of her beauty and merit have such a variety of admirers, that they are shock'd to think of giving up all the rest by fixing on one. Besides, so many pretty gentlemen are continually attending them, and whispering soft things in their ears, who think all their services well repaid by a curtsy or a smile, that they are startled, and think a lover a most unreasonable creature, who can imagine he merits their whole person.

Cler. They are, of all people, my aversion: they are a sort of spaniels, who, tho' they have no chance of running down the hare themselves, often spoil the chace. I have known one of these fellows pursue half the fine women in town, without any other design than of enjoying them all in the arms of a strumpet. It is pleasant enough to see them watching the eyes of a woman of quality half an hour, to get an opportunity of making a bow to her.

Fred. Which she often returns with a smile, or some more extraordinary mark of affection; from a charitable design of giving pain to her real admirer, who, tho' he can't be jealous of the animal, is concern'd to see her condescend to take notice of him.

Enter Harriet.

Har. I suppose, brother, you have heard of my good father's oeconomy, that he has resolv'd to join

‘ two entertainments in one——and prevent giving an extraordinary wedding supper.

‘ *Fred.* Yes, I have heard it, and I hope have taken measures to prevent it.

‘ *Har.* Why, did you believe it then?

‘ *Fred.* I think I had no longer room to doubt.

‘ *Har.* I would not believe it, if I were to see them in bed together.

‘ *Fred.* Heaven forbid it!

‘ *Har.* So say I too. Heaven forbid I should have such a mother-in-law! but, I think, if she were wedded into any other family, you would have no reason to lament the loss of so constant a mistress.

‘ *Fred.* Dear Harriet, indulge my weakness.

‘ *Har.* I will indulge your weakness with all my heart——but the men ought not; for they are such lovers as you who spoil the women.——Come, if you will bring Mr. Clermont into my apartment, I’ll give you a dish of tea, and you shall have some *sal volatile* in it, tho’ you have no real cause for any depression of your spirits; for I dare swear your mistress is very safe. And I am sure, if she were to be lost in the manner you apprehend, she would be the best loss you ever had in your life.

‘ *Cler.* O Frederick! if your mistress were but equal to your sister, you might be well called the happiest of mankind.’ [Exeunt.

S C E N E A Chamber.

Mariana and Lappet.

Lap. Ha, ha, ha! and so you have persuaded the old lady, that you really intend to have him?

Mar. I tell you, I do really intend to have him.

Lap. Have him! ha, ha, ha! For what do you intend to have him?

Mar. Have I not told you already, that I will marry him?

Lap. Indeed, you will not!

Mar. How! Mrs. Impertinence! has your mistress told you so? and did she send you hither to persuade me against the match?

Lap. What should you marry him for? As for his riches,

riches, you might as well think of going hungry to fine entertainment, where you were sure of not being suffer'd to eat. The very income of your own fortune will be more than he will allow you. Adieu fine clothes, operas, plays, assemblies; adieu dear *quadrille*—and to what have you sacrificed all these?—not to a husband—for whatever you make of him, you will never make a husband of him, I'm sure.

Mar. This is a liberty, Madam, I shall not allow you: if you intend to stay in this house, you must leave off these pretty airs you have lately given yourself.—Remember you are a servant here, and not the mistress, as you have been suffered to affect.

Lap. You may lay aside your airs too, good Madam, if you come to that; for I shall not desire to stay in this house, when you are the mistress of it.

Mar. It will be prudent in you, not to put on your usual insolence to me; for if you do, your master shall punish you for it.

Lap. I have one comfort, he will not be able to punish me half so much as he will you. The worst he can do to me is to turn me out of the house—but you he can keep in it. Wife to an old fellow! laugh!

Mar. If Miss Harriet sent you on this errand, you may return, and tell her, her wit is shallower than I imagin'd it—and since she has no more experience, I believe I shall send my daughter-in-law to school again. *[Exit.]*

Lap. Hum! you will have a school-master at home. I begin to doubt whether this sweet-temper'd creature will not marry in spite at last. I have one project more to prevent her, and that I will about instantly. *[Exit.]*

S C E N E, *the Garden.*

Lovegold and Mrs. Wisely.

Love. I cannot be easy: I must settle something upon her.

Mrs. Wise. Believe me, Mr. Lovegold, it is unnecessary: when you die, you will leave your wife very well provided for.

Love. Indeed, I have known several law-suits happen on these accounts; and sometimes the whole has been thrown away in disputing to which party it belonged.

I shall not sleep in my grave, while a set of villanous lawyers are dividing the little money I have among them.

Mrs. Wife. I know this old fool is fond enough now to come to any terms; but it is ill trusting him: violent passions can never last long at his years. [*Aside.*

Love. What are you considering?

Mrs. Wife. Mr. Lovegold, I am sure, knows the world too well to have the worse opinion of any woman from her prudence: therefore I must tell you, this delay of the match does not at all please me. It seems to argue your inclination abated, and so it is better to let the treaty end here. My daughter has a very good offer now, which were she to refuse on your account, she would make a very ridiculous figure in the world after you had left her.

Love. Alas! Madam, I love her better than any thing almost upon the face of the earth; this delay is to secure her a good jointure: I am not worth the money the world says; I am not indeed.

Mrs. Wife. Well, Sir, then there can be no harm, for the satisfaction both of her mind and mine, in your signing a small contract, which can be prepar'd immediately.

Love. What signifies signing, Madam?

Mrs. Wife. I see, Sir, you don't care for it; so there is no harm done. And really this other is so very advantageous an offer, that I don't know whether I shall not be blam'd for refusing him on any account.

Love. Nay, but be not in haste: what would you have me sign?

Mrs. Wife. Only to perform your promise of marriage.

Love. Well, well, let your lawyer draw it up then, and mine shall look it over.

Mrs. Wife. I believe my lawyer is in the house: I'll go to him, and get it done instantly; and then we will give this gentleman a final answer. I assure you, he is a very advantageous offer. [*Exit.*

Love. As I intend to marry this girl, there can be no harm in signing the contract: her lawyer draws it up, so I shall be at no expence; for I can get mine to look it over for nothing. I should have done very wisely indeed, to have entitl'd her to a third of my fortune, whereas

whereas I will not make her jointure above a tenth! I protest, it is with some difficulty that I have prevail'd with myself to put off the match: I am more in love, I find, than I suspected.

Enter Lappet.

Lap. O unhappy, miserable creature that I am! what shall I do? whither shall I go?

Love. What's the matter, Lappet?

Lap. To have been innocently assisting in betraying so good a man! so good a master! so good a friend!

Love. Lappet, I say.

Lap. I shall never forgive myself, I shall never outlive it, I shall never eat, drink, sleep ——— [*Runs against him.*]

Love. One would think you were walking in your sleep now. What can be the meaning of this?

Lap. O Sir! ——— you are undone, Sir! and I am undone!

Love. How! what! has any one robb'd me? have I lost any thing?

Lap. No, Sir; but you have got something.

Love. What? what?

Lap. A wife, Sir.

Love. No, I have not yet ——— but why ———

Lap. How! Sir, are you not married?

Love. No.

Lap. That is the happiest word I ever heard come out of your mouth.

Love. I have, for some particular reasons, put off the match for a few days.

Lap. Yes, Sir; and for some particular reasons, you shall put off the match for a few years.

Love. What do you say?

Lap. O Sir! this affair has almost determin'd me never to engage in matrimonial matters again. I have been finely deceiv'd in this lady. I told you, Sir, she had an estate in a certain country; but I find it is all a cheat, Sir; the devil of any estate has she.

Love. How! not any estate at all! How can she live then?

Lap. Nay, Sir, Heaven knows how half the people in this town live.

Love. However, it is an excellent good quality in a woman

woman to be able to live without an estate. - She that can make something out of nothing, will make a little go a great way. I am sorry she has no fortune; but considering all her saving qualities, Lappet——

Lap. All an imposition, Sir: she is the most extravagant wretch upon earth.

Love. How! how! extravagant!

Lap. I tell you, Sir, she is downright extravagance itself.

Love. Can it be possible, after what you told me?

Lap. Alas! Sir! that was only a cloke thrown over her real inclinations.

Love. How was it possible for you to be so deceiv'd in her?

Lap. Alas! Sir, she would have deceiv'd any one upon earth, even you yourself; for, Sir, during a whole fortnight, since you have been in love with her, she has made it her whole business to conceal her extravagance, and appear thrifty.

Love. That is a good sign tho': Lappet, let me tell you, that is a good sign; right habits as well as wrong are got by affecting them. And she who could be thrifty a whole fortnight, gives lively hopes that she may be brought to be so as long as she lives.

Lap. She loves play to distraction: it is the only visible way in the world she has of a living.

Love. She must win then, Lappet; and play, when people play the best of the game, is no such very bad thing. Besides, as she plays only to support herself, when she can be supported without it, she may leave it off.

Lap. To support her extravagance, in dress particularly; why, don't you see, Sir, she is dress'd out to-day like a princess?

Love. It may be an effect of prudence in a young woman to dress, in order to get a husband. And as that is apparently her motive, when she is married that motive ceases: and to say the truth, she is in discourse a very prudent young woman.

Lap. Think of her extravagance.

Love. A woman of the greatest modesty!

Lap. And extravagance.

Love. She has really a very fine set of teeth.

Lap.

Lap. She will have all the teeth out of your head.

Love. I never saw finer eyes.

Lap. She will eat you out of house and home.

Love. Charming hair.

Lap. She will ruin you.

Love. Sweet kissing lips, swelling breasts, and the finest shape that ever was embraced.

[*Catching Lappet in his arms.*]

Lap. O Sir! I am not the lady.—Was ever such an old goat! [*Aside.*]—Well, Sir, I see you are determin'd on the match, and so I desire you wou'd pay me my wages. I cannot bear to see the ruin of a family in which I have lived so long, that I have contracted as great a friendship for it, as if it was my own: I can't bear to see waste, riot, and extravagance; to see all the wealth a poor, honest, industrious gentleman has been raising all his life-time, squander'd away in a year or two, in feasts, balls, music, cards, clothes, jewels—It would break my heart, to see my poor old master eat out by a set of singers, fiddlers, milliners, mantua-makers, mercers, toymen, jewellers, fops, cheats, rakes—To see his guineas fly about like dust; all his ready money paid in one morning to one tradesman; his whole stock in the funds spent in one half year; all his land swallowed down in another; all his old gold, nay, the very plate which he has had in his family time out of mind, which has descended from father to son ever since the flood, to see even that disposed of. What will they have next, I wonder, when they have had all that he is worth in the world, and left the poor old man without any thing to furnish his old age with the necessaries of life—Will they be contented then? or will they tear out his bowels, and eat them too? [*Both burst into tears.*] The laws are cruel, to put it in the power of a wife to ruin her husband in this manner—And will any one tell me that such a woman as this is handsome?—What are a pair of shining eyes, when they must be bought with the loss of all one's shining old gold?

Love. O my poor old gold!

Lap. Perhaps she has a fine set of teeth.

Love. My poor plate, that I have hoarded with so much care!

Lap. Or I'll grant she may have a most beautiful shape.

Love. My dear land and tenements!

Lap. What are the roses on her cheeks, or lilies in her neck?

Love. My poor India bonds, bearing at least three and a half per cent.

Lap. A fine excuse, indeed, when a man is ruined by his wife, to tell us he has married a beauty!

Enter Lawyer.

Law. Sir, the contract is ready: my client has sent for the counsel on the other side, and he is now below examining it.

Love. Get you out of my doors, you villain, you and your client too! I'll contract you, with a pox!

Law. Hey-day! sure you are *non compos mentis*!

Love. No, firrah! I had like to have been *non compos mentis*; but I have had the good luck to escape it. Go! and tell your client I have discover'd her: bid her take her advantageous offer; for I shall sign no contracts.

Law. This is the strangest thing I have met with in my whole course of practice.

Love. I am very much obliged to you, Lappet; indeed, I am very much obliged to you.

Lap. I am sure, Sir, I have a very great satisfaction in serving you; and I hope you will consider of that little affair that I mentioned to you to-day about my law-suit.

Love. I am very much obliged to you.

Lap. I hope, Sir, you won't suffer me to be ruined, when I have preserved you from it.

Love. Hey! *[Appearing deaf.]*

Lap. You know, Sir, that in Westminster-hall money and right are always on the same side.

Love. Ay, so they are; very true, so they are; and therefore no one can take too much care of his money.

Lap. The smallest matter of money, Sir, would do me an infinite service.

Love. Hey! What?

Lap. A small matter of money, Sir, would do me a great kindness.

Love.

Love. Oho! I have a very great kindness for you; indeed I have a very great kindness for you.

Lap. Pox take your kindness! — I'm only losing time: there's nothing to be got out of him. So I'll ev'n to Frederick, and see what the report of my success will do there. Ah! would I were married to thee myself! [*Afide.*] [*Exit.*]

Love. What a prodigious escape have I had! I cannot look at the precipice without being giddy.

Enter Ramilie.

Love. Who is that? Oh, is it you, Sirrah? How dare you enter within these walls?

Ramil. Truly, Sir, I can scarcely reconcile it to myself: I think, after what has happened, you have no great title to my friendship. But I don't know how it is, Sir, there is something or other about you which strangely engages my affections, and which, together with the friendship I have for your son, won't let me suffer you to be imposed upon; and to prevent that, Sir, is the whole and sole occasion of my coming within your doors. Did not a certain lady, Sir, called Mrs. Lappet, depart from you just now?

Love. What if she did, Sirrah?

Ramil. Has she not, Sir, been talking to you about a young lady whose name is Mariana?

Love. Well, and what then?

Ramil. Why, then, Sir, every single syllable she has told you has been, neither more nor less, than a most confounded lie; as is, indeed, every word she says: for I don't believe, upon a modest calculation, she has told six truths since she has been in the house. She is made up of lies: her father was an attorney, and her mother was chambermaid to a maid of honour. The first word she spoke was a lie, and so will be the last. I know she has pretended a great affection for you, that's one lie; and every thing she has said of Mariana is another.

Love. How! how! are you sure of this?

Ramil. Why, Sir, she and I laid the plot together; that one time, indeed, I myself was forced to deviate a little from the truth; but it was with a good design: the jade pretended to me that it was out of friendship to my master; that it was because she thought such a match would not be at all to his interest: but, alas! Sir, I

know her friendship begins and ends at home; and that she has friendship for no person living but herself. Why, Sir, do but look at Mariana, Sir, and see whether you can think her such a sort of woman as she has described her to you.

Love. Indeed she has appeared to me always in a different light. I do believe what you say. This jade has been bribed by my children to impose upon me. I forgive thee all that thou hast done, for this one service. I will go deny all that I said to the lawyer, and put an end to every thing this moment. I knew it was impossible she could be such a sort of a woman.

[*Exit.*]

Ramil. And I will go find out my master, make him the happiest of mankind, squeeze his purse, and then get drunk for the honour of all party-coloured politicians.

S C E N E *the Hall.*

Enter Frederick and Lappet.

Fred. Excellent Lappet! I shall never think I have sufficiently rewarded you for what you have done.

Lap. I have only done half the business yet. I have, I believe, effectually broke off the match with your father. Now, Sir, I shall make up the matter between you and her.

Fred. Do but that, dear girl, and I'll coin myself into guineas.

Lap. Keep yourself for your lady, Sir; she will take all that sort of coin, I warrant her: as for me, I shall be much more easily contented.

Fred. But what hopes can'st thou have? for I, alas! see none.

Lap. O Sir! it is more easy to make half a dozen matches, than to break one! and, to say the truth, it is an office I myself like better. ' There is something, ' methinks, so pretty in bringing young people together that are fond of one another. I protest, Sir, ' you will be a mighty handsome couple. How fond ' will you be of a little girl the exact picture of her ' mother! and how fond will she be of a boy to put ' her in mind of his father!

Fred.

Fred. Death! you jade, you have fir'd my imagination.

Lap. But methinks I want to have the hurricane begin, hugely: I am surpriz'd they are not all together by the ears already.

Enter Ramilie.

Ramil. O Madam! I little expected to have found you and my master together, after what has happened: I did not think you had the assurance——

Fred. Peace, Ramilie! all is well: and Lappet is the best friend I have in the world.

Ramil. Yes, Sir, all is well indeed! no thanks to her: happy is the master that has a good servant! a good servant is certainly the greatest treasure in this world. I have done your business for you, Sir: I have frustrated all she has been doing, denied all she has been telling him: In short, Sir, I observed her ladyship in a long conference with the old gentleman, mightily to your interest, as you imagine. No sooner was she gone, than I stepped in, and made the old gentleman believe every single syllable she had told him, to be a most confounded lie: and away he is gone, fully determined to put an end to the affair.

Lap. And sign the contract: so now, Sir, you are ruined without reprieve.

Fred. Death and damnation! fool! villain!

Ramil. Heyday! what is the meaning of this? Have I done any more than you commanded me?

Fred. Nothing but my curs'd stars cou'd have contriv'd so damn'd an accident.

Ramil. You cannot blame me, Sir, whatever has happened.

Fred. I don't blame you, Sir, nor myself, nor any one: Fortune has marked me out for misery. But I will be no longer idle: since I am to be ruin'd, I'll meet my destruction. [Exit,

[Lappet and Ramilie stand some time silent, looking at each other.]

Lap. I give you joy, Sir, of the success of your negotiation: you have approv'd yourself a most able person, truly! and I dare swear, when your skill is once known, you will not want employment.

Ramil. Do not triumph, good Mrs. Lappet: a politician

cian may make a blunder: I am sure no one can avoid it, that is employ'd with you; for you change sides so often, that 'tis impossible to tell at any time which side you are on.

Lap. And pray, Sirrah, what was the occasion of your betraying me to your master? for he has told me all.

Ramil. Conscience, conscience, Mrs. Lappet, the great guide of all my actions: I could not find in my heart to let him lose his mistress.

Lap. Your master is very much obliged to you, indeed, to lose your own, in order to preserve his! henceforth I forbid all your addresses; I disown all obligations; I revoke all promises: henceforth I would advise you never to open your lips to me; for if you do, it will be in vain: I shall be deaf to all your little, false, mean, treacherous, base insinuations. I would have you know, Sir, a woman injur'd, as I am, never can, nor ought to forgive. Never see my face again.

[*Exit.*

Ramil. Huh! now would some lovers think themselves very unhappy; but I, who have had experience in the sex, am never frightened at the frowns of a mistress, nor ravish'd with her smiles; they both naturally succeed one another: and a woman, generally, is as sure to perform what she threatens, as she is what she promises. But now I'll to my lurking-place. I'm sure this old rogue has money hid in the garden: if I can but discover it, I shall handsomely quit all scores with the old gentleman, and make my master a sufficient return for the loss of his mistress.

[*Exit.*

S C E N E, *Another apartment.*

Frederick, Mrs. Wisely and Mariana.

Fred. No, Madam: I have no words to upbraid you with, nor shall I attempt it.

Mrs. Wise. I think, Sir, a respect to your father should keep you now within the rules of decency: as for my daughter, after what has happened, I think she cannot expect it on any other account.

Mar. Dear Mama, don't be serious, when, I dare say, Mr. Frederick is in jest.

Fred. This exceeds all you have done: to insult the person.

person you have made miserable, is more cruel than having made him so.

Mar. Come, come, you may not be so miserable as you expect. I know the word *mother-in-law* has a terrible sound; but perhaps I may make a better than you imagine. Believe me, you will see a change in this house, which will not be disagreeable to a man of Mr. Frederick's gay temper.

Fred. All changes to me are henceforth equal. When Fortune robbed me of you, she made her utmost effort: I now despise all in her power.

Mrs. Wife. I must insist, Sir, on your behaving in a different manner to my daughter. The world is apt to be censorious. O heavens! I shudder at the apprehensions of having a reflection cast on my family, which has hitherto pass'd unblemished.

Fred. I shall take care, Madam, to shun any possibility of giving you such a fear; for from this night I never will behold those dear, those fatal eyes again.

Mar. Nay, that I am sure will cast a reflection on me. What a person will the world think me to be, when you cou'd not live with me?

Fred. Live with you! O Mariana! those words bring back a thousand tender ideas to my mind. Oh! had that been my bless'd fortune!

Mrs. Wife. Let me beg, Sir, you would keep a greater distance. The young fellows of this age are so rampant, that even degrees of kindred cannot restrain them.

Fred. There are yet no such degrees between us.—O Mariana! while it is in your power, while the irrevocable wax remains unstamp'd, consider, and do not seal my ruin.

Mrs. Wife. Come with me, daughter: you shall not stay a moment longer with him—a rude fellow!

[*Exeunt Mrs. Wisely and Mariana.*
Enter Ramilie.

Ramil. Follow me, Sir, follow me this instant.

Fred. What's the matter?

Ramil. Follow me, Sir: we are in the right box; the business is done.

Fred. What done?

Ramil. I have it under my arm, Sir—here it is!

Fred. What? what?

Ramil.

Ramil. Your father's soul, Sir, his money—Follow me, Sir, this moment, before we are overtaken.

Fred. Ha! this may preserve me yet. *[Exeunt.]*

Enter Lovegold in the utmost distraction.

Thieves! thieves! assassination! murder! I am undone! all my money is gone! who is the thief? where is the villain? where shall I find him? Give me my money again, villain. *[Catching himself by the arm.]* I am distracted! I know not where I am, nor what I am, nor what I do. O my money, my money! Ha! what say you? Alack-a-day! here is no one. The villain must have watch'd his time carefully; he must have done it while I was signing that d——n'd contract. I will go to a Justice, and have all my house put to their oaths, my servants, my children, my mistress, and myself too; all the people in the house, and in the street, and in the town: I will have them all executed; I will hang all the world; and if I don't find my money, I will hang myself afterwards. *[Exit.]*

ACT V. SCENE the Hall.

Several Servants.

James. **T**H E R E will be rare doings now! Madam's an excellent woman, faith! things won't go as they have done: she has order'd something like a supper; here will be victuals enough for the whole town.

Thomas. She's a sweet-humour'd lady, I can tell you that. I have had a very good place on't with her. You will have no more use for locks and keys in this house, now.

James. This is the luckiest day I ever saw: as soon as supper is over, I will get drunk to her good health, I am resolv'd; and that's more than ever I could have done here before.

Thomas. You shan't want liquor, for here are ten hogsheds of strong beer coming in.

James. Bless her heart! good lady! I wish she had a better bridegroom.

Thomas. Ah! never mind that, he has a good purse: and for other things, let her alone, master James.

Wheed.

Wheed. Thomas, you must go to Mr. Mixture's the wine-merchant, and order him to send twelve dozen of his best Champagne, twelve dozen of Burgundy, and twelve dozen of Hermitage. And you must call at the wax-chandler's, and bid him send in a chest of candles; and at Lambert's the confectioner in Pall-Mall, and order the finest desert he can furnish; and you, Will, must go to Mr. Gray's, the horse-jockey, and order him to buy my lady three of the finest geldings for her coach, to-morrow morning; and here, you must take this roll, and invite all the people in it to supper; then you must go to the playhouse in Drury-Lane, and engage all the music, for my lady intends to have a ball.

James. O brave Mrs. Wheedle! here are fine times!

Wheed. My lady desires that supper may be kept back as much as possible; and if you can think of any thing to add to it, she desires you would.

James. She is the best of ladies.

Wheed. So you will say when you know her better: she has thought of nothing, ever since matters have been made up between her and your master, but how to lay out as much money as she could; — we shall all have rare places.

James. I thought to have given warning to-morrow morning, but I believe I shall not be in haste now.

Wheed. See what it is to have a woman at the head of the house. But here she comes. Go you into the kitchen, and see that all things be in the nicest order.

James. I am ready to leap out of my skin for joy!

[*Exeunt all but Mrs. Wheedle.*]

Enter Mariana, Upholsterer, and Mrs. Wisely.

Mar. Wheedle, have you dispatched the servants according to my orders?

Wheed. Yes, Madam.

Mar. You will take care, Mr. Furnish, and let me have those two beds with the utmost expedition?

Uphol. I shall take a particular care, Madam. I shall put them both in hand to-morrow morning; I shall put off some work, Madam, on that account.

Mar. That tapestry in the dining-room does not at all please me.

Uphol.

Uphol. Your ladyship is very much in the right, Madam: it is quite out of fashion: no one hangs a room now with tapestry.

Mar. Oh! I have the greatest fondness for tapestry in the world! you must positively get me some of a newer pattern.

Uphol. Truly, Madam, as you say, tapestry is one of the prettiest sorts of furniture for a room that I know of. I believe I can shew you some that will please you.

Mrs. Wife. I protest, child, I can't see any reason for this alteration.

Mar. Dear Mama, let me have my will. There is not any one thing in the whole house that I shall be able to leave in it, every thing has so much of antiquity about it; and I cannot endure the sight of any thing that is not perfectly modern.

Uphol. Your ladyship is in the right, Madam: there is no possibility of being in the fashion without new-furnishing a house, at least once in twenty years; and indeed to be at the very top of the fashion, you will have need of almost continual alterations.

Mrs. Wife. That is an extravagance I would never submit to. I have no notion of destroying one's goods before they are half worn out, by following the ridiculous whims of two or three people of quality.

Uphol. Ha! ha! Madam, I believe her ladyship is of a different opinion—I have many a set of goods entirely whole, that I would be very loth to put into your hands.

Enter Mercer and Jeweller.

Mar. O Mr. Sattin! have you brought those gold stuffs I ordered you?

Merc. Yes, Madam, I have brought your ladyship some of the finest patterns that were ever made.

Mar. Well, Mr. Sparkle, have you the necklace and ear-rings with you?

Jewel. Yes, Madam; and I defy any jeweller in town to shew you their equals: they are, I think, the finest water I ever saw: they are finer than the Dutchess of Glitter's, which have been so much admired: I have brought you a solitaire too, Madam: my lady Raffle bought the fellow of it yesterday.

Mar.

Mar. Sure, it has a flaw in it, Sir.

Jewel. Has it, Madam? then there never was a brilliant without one: I am sure, Madam, I bought it for a good stone, and if it be not a good stone, you shall have it for nothing.

Enter Lovegold.

Love. It's lost, it's gone, it's irrecoverable: I shall never see it more!

Mar. And what will be the lowest price of the necklace and ear-rings?

Jewel. If you were my sister, Madam, I could not 'bate you one farthing of three thousand guineas.

Love. What do you say of three thousand guineas, villain? Have you my three thousand guineas?

Mrs. Wife. Bless me, Mr. Lovegold! what's the matter?

Love. I am undone! I am ruined! my money is stolen! my dear three thousand guineas, that I received but yesterday, are taken away from the place I had put them in, and I shall never see them again!

Mar. Don't let them make you uneasy, you may possibly recover them; or if you should not, the loss is but a trifle.

Love. How! a trifle! do you call three thousand guineas a trifle?

Mrs. Wife. She sees you so disturbed, that she is willing to make as light of your loss as possible, in order to comfort you.

Love. To comfort me! Can she comfort me by calling three thousand guineas a trifle? But tell me, what were you saying of them? Have you seen them?

Jewel. Really, Sir, I do not understand you: I was telling the lady the price of a necklace and a pair of ear-rings, which were as cheap at three thousand guineas as—

Love. How! what? what?

Mar. I can't think them very cheap. However, I am resolved to have them; so let him have the money, Sir, if you please.

Love. I am in a dream!

Mar. You will be paid immediately, Sir. Well, Mr. Sattin, and pray what is the highest-priced gold stuff you have brought?

Mer.

Mer. Madam, I have one of twelve pounds a yard.

Mar. It must be pretty at that price. Let me have a gown and petticoat cut off.

Love. You shall cut off my head first. What are you doing? are you mad?

Mar. I am only preparing a proper dress to appear in as your wife.

Love. Sirrah, offer to open any of your pick-pocket trinkets here, and I'll make an example of you.

Mar. Mr. Lovegold, give me leave to tell you, this is a behaviour I don't understand. You give me a fine pattern before marriage of the usage I am to expect after it!

Love. Here are fine patterns of what I am to expect after it!

Mar. I assure you, Sir, I shall insist on all the privileges of an English wife. I shall not be taught to dress by my husband. I am myself the best judge of what you can afford; and if I do stretch your purse a little, it is for your own honour, Sir. The world will know it is your wife that makes such a figure.

Love. Can you bear to hear this, Madam?

Mrs. Wife. I should not countenance my daughter in any extravagance, Sir; but the honour of my family, as well as yours, is concern'd in her appearing handsomely. Let me tell you, Mr. Lovegold, the whole world is very sensible of your fondness for money: I think it a very great blessing to you, that you have met with a woman of a different temper, one who will preserve your reputation in the world whether you will or no. Not that I would insinuate to you, that my daughter, she will ever run you into unnecessary expences; so far from it, that if you will but generously make her a present of five thousand pounds to fit herself out at first in clothes and jewels, I dare swear you will not have any other demand on those accounts—I don't know when.

Mar. No, unless a birth-night suit or two, I shall scarce want any thing more this twelvemonth.

Love. I am undone, plundered, murdered! However, there is one comfort, I am not married yet.

Mar. And free to choose whether you will marry at all, or no.

Mrs.

Mrs. Wife. The consequence, you know, will be no more than a poor ten thousand pound; which is all the forfeiture of the breach of contract.

Love. But, Madam, I have one way yet. I have not bound my heirs and executors; and so, if I hang myself, I am off the bargain——In the mean while I'll try if I cannot rid my house of this nest of thieves.——Get out of my doors, you cutpurses.

Jewel. Pay me for my jewels, Sir, or return 'em me.

Love. Give him his baubles; give them him.

Mar. I shall not, I assure you. You need be under no apprehension, Sir: you see Mr. Lovegold is a little disordered at present; but if you come to-morrow, you shall have your money.

Jewel. I'll depend on your ladyship, Madam. [*Exit.*]

Love. Who the devil are you? What have you to do here?

Upbol. I am an upholsterer, Sir; and come to new-furnish your house.

Love. Out of my doors this instant, or I will dis-furnish your head for you: I'll beat out your brains.

[*Exit Upbol.*]

Mrs. Wife. Sure, Sir, you are mad.

Love. I was when I sign'd the contract. Oh! that I had never learnt to write my name!

Enter Charles Bubbleboy.

Cha. Your most obedient servant, Madam.

Love. Who are you, Sir? What do you want here?

Cha. Sir, my name is Charles Bubbleboy.

Love. What's your business?

Cha. Sir, I was ordered to bring some snuff-boxes and rings. Will you please, Sir, to look at that snuff-box? there is but one person in England, Sir, can work in this manner. If he was but as diligent as he is able, he would get an immense estate, Sir; if he had an hundred thousand hands, I could keep them all employed. I have brought you a pair of new invented snuffers too, Madam. Be pleas'd to look at them; they are my own invention: the nicest lady in the world may make use of them.

Love. Who the devil sent for you, Sir?

Mar. I sent for him, Sir.

Cha.

Cha. Yes, Sir, I was told it was a lady sent for me.
 Will you please, Madam, to look at the snuff-boxes
 or rings first?

Love. Will you please to go to the devil, Sir, first,
 or shall I send you?

Cha. Sir!

Love. Get you out of my house this instant, or I'll
 break your snuff-boxes, and your bones too.

Cha. Sir, I was sent for, or I should not have
 come. Charles Bubbleboy does not want custom.
 Madam, your most obedient servant. [Exit.

Mar. I suppose, Sir, you expect to be finely spoken
 of abroad, for this: you will get an excellent character
 in the world by this behaviour.

Mrs. Wife. Is this your gratitude to a woman who
 has refused so much better offers on your account?

Love. Oh! wou'd she had taken them! Give me
 up my contract, and I will gladly resign all right and
 title whatsoever.

Mrs. Wife. It is too late now, the gentlemen have had
 their answers: a good offer once refused, is not to be
 had again.

Wheed. Madam, the taylor, whom your ladyship sent
 for, is come.

Mar. Bid him come in. This is an instance of the
 regard I have for you. I have sent for one of the best
 taylors in town to make you a new suit of clothes, that
 you may appear like a gentleman; for as it is for your
 honour that I should be well dress'd, so it is for mine
 that you should. Come, Madam, we will go in and
 give further orders concerning the entertainment.

[Exeunt all but Lovegold.

Enter Lift.

Love. O Lappet, Lappet! the time thou hast pro-
 phesy'd of, is come to pass.

Lift. I am your honour's most humble servant. My
 name is Lift. I presume I am the person you sent for
 —the laceman will be here immediately. Will your
 honour be pleased to be taken measure of first, or look
 over the patterns: if you please, we will take measure
 first. I do not know, Sir, who was so kind as to recom-
 mend me to you, but I believe I shall give you entire
 satisfaction. I may defy any taylor in England to un-
 derstand

derstand the fashion better than myself; the thing is impossible, Sir. I always visit France twice a year; and tho' I say it, that should not say it——Stand upright, if you please, Sir——

Love. I'll take measure of your back, firrah——I'll teach such pickpockets as you are, to come here——Out of my doors, you villain.

Lift. Heyday! Sir, did you send for me for this, Sir? —I shall bring you in a bill without any clothes. [*Exit.*

Enter James and Porter.

Love. Where are you going? What have you there?

James. Some fine wine, Sir, that my lady sent for to Mr. Mixture's—But, Sir, it will be impossible for me to get supper ready by twelve, as it is ordered, unless I have more assistance. I want half a dozen kitchens too. The very wild-fowl that my lady has sent for, will take up a dozen spits.

Love. Oh! oh! it is in vain to oppose it: her extravagance is like a violent fire, that is no sooner stopped in one place, than it breaks out in another.—[*Drums beat without.*] Ha! what is the meaning of this? Is my house besieged? Would they would set it on fire, and burn all in it.

Drum. [*Without.*] Heavens bless your honour! 'squire Lovegold, Madam Lovegold; long life and happiness, and many children attend you——and so God save the King. [*Drums beat.*

[*Lovegold goes out, and soon after the drum ceases.*

James. So he has quieted the drums, I find—This is the roguery of some well-wishing neighbours of his. Well, we shall soon see which will get the better, my master or my mistress. If my master does, away go I; if my mistress, I'll stay while there is any house-keeping, which can't be long; for the riches of my lord mayor will never hold out at this rate.

Enter Lovegold.

Love. James! I shall be destroy'd; in one week I shall not be worth a groat upon earth. Go, send all the provisions back to the tradesmen; put out all the fires; leave not so much as a candle burning.

James. Sir, I don't know how to do it: Madam commanded me, and I dare not disobey her.

Love.

Love. How! not when I command thee!

James. I have lost several places, Sir, by obeying the master against the mistress; but never lost one by obeying the mistress against the master. Besides, Sir, she is so good and generous a lady, that it would go against my very heart to offend her.

Love. The devil take her generosity!

James. And I don't believe she has provided one morsel more than will be eat: why, Sir, she has invited above five hundred people to supper; within this hour, your house will be as full as Westminster-hall the last day of term—But I have no time to lose.

[Exit.

Love. Oh! Oh! What shall I do?

Enter Lappet.

Lap. Where is my poor master? O Sir! I cannot express the affliction I am in to see you devoured in this manner. How cou'd you, Sir, when I told you what a woman she was? how cou'd you undo yourself with your eyes open?

Love. Poor Lappet! had I taken your advice, I had been happy.

Lap. And I too, Sir; for alack-a-day, I am as miserable as you are: I feel every thing for you, Sir; indeed, I shall break my heart upon your account.

Love. I shall be much obliged to you if you do, Lappet.

Lap. How could a man of your sense, Sir, marry in so precipitate a manner?

Love. I am not married; I am not married.

Lap. Not married!

Love. No, no, no.

Lap. All's safe yet. No man is quite undone till he is married.

Love. I am, I am undone. O Lappet! I cannot tell it thee. I have given her a bond, a bond, a bond of ten thousand pounds to marry her.

Lap. You shall forfeit it.

Love. Forfeit what? My life, and soul, and blood, and heart.

Lap. You shall forfeit it——

Love. I'll be buried alive sooner; 'no, I am deter-
'mined

‘mined I’ll marry her first, and hang myself afterwards
‘to save my money.

‘*Lap.* I see, Sir, you are undone; and if you should
‘hang yourself, I could not blame you.

‘‘*Love.* Could I but save one thousand by it, I would
‘hang myself with all my soul. Shall I live to die
‘not worth a groat?’

‘‘*Lap.* Oh! my poor master! my poor master!
‘[Exit crying.]’

‘*Love.* Why did not I die a year ago? what a deal
had I sav’d by dying a year ago! [A noise without.]
Oh! oh! dear Lappet, see what it is: I shall be un-
done in an hour—Oh!

‘Enter Clermont richly dress’d.

‘*Love.* What is here?—Some of the people who are to
eat me up?

‘*Cler.* Don’t you know me, Sir?

‘*Love.* Know you! Ha! What is the meaning of this?
—Oh! it is plain, it is too plain: my money has
paid for all this finery. Ah! base wretch! could I
have suspected you of such an action, of lurking in my
house to use me in such a manner?

‘*Cler.* Sir, I am come to confess the fact to you; and
if you will but give me leave to reason with you,
you will not find yourself so much injured as you
imagine.

‘*Love.* Not injured! when you have stolen away my
blood!

‘*Cler.* Your blood is not fallen into bad hands; I am
a gentleman, Sir.

‘*Love.* Here’s impudence! a fellow robs me, and tells
me he is a gentleman. —Tell me who tempted you to
it?

‘*Cler.* Ah, Sir! need I say—love.

‘*Love.* Love!

‘*Cler.* Yes, love, Sir.

‘*Love.* Very pretty love, indeed! the love of my gui-
neas.

‘‘*Cler.* Ah, Sir, think not so. Do but grant me the
‘free possession of what I have, and, by Heaven, I’ll
‘never ask you more.

‘‘*Love.* Oh, most unequall’d impudence! Was ever
‘so modest a request!

D

‘*Cler.*

Cler. All your efforts to separate us will be vain :
 ' we have sworn never to forsake each other ; and no-
 ' thing but death can part us.

Love. I don't question, Sir, the very great affection
 ' on your side : ' but I believe I shall find methods to
 recover——

Cler. By Heavens ! I'll die in defending my right ;
 and if that were the case, think not, when I am gone,
 you ever could possess what you have robb'd me of.

Love. Ha ! that's true ; he may find ways to prevent
 the restoring it. Well, well, let me delight my eyes at
 least ; let me see my treasure, and perhaps I may give
 it you : perhaps I may.

Cler. Then I am blest ! Well may you say treasure :
 ' for to possess that treasure is to be rich indeed.

Love. Yes, truly I think three thousand pounds
 ' may well be call'd a treasure. — Go, go, fetch it hi-
 ' ther ; perhaps I may give it you — fetch it hither.'

Cler. To shew you, Sir, the confidence I place in
 you, I will fetch hither all that I love and adore.
 [Exit.

Love. Sure never was so impudent a fellow ! to con-
 fess his robbery before my face, and desire to keep what
 he has stolen, as if he had a right to it.

Enter Lappet.

Love. O Lappet ! what's the matter ?

Lap. O Sir ! I am scarce able to tell you. It is
 spread about the town that you are married, and your
 wife's creditors are coming in whole flocks. There is
 one single debt for five thousand pounds, which an at-
 torney is without to demand.

Love. Oh ! Oh ! Oh ! let them cut my throat.

Lap. Think what an escape you have had ! think, if
 you had married her——

Love. I am as bad as married to her.

Lap. It is impossible, Sir ; nothing can be so bad :
 what, you are to pay her ten thousand pounds ? ——
 Well——and ten thousand pounds are a sum ; they are
 a sum, I own it——they are a sum ; but what is such a
 sum, compared with such a wife ? Had you married
 her, in one week you wou'd have been in a prison,
 Sir——

Love. If I am, I can keep my money: they can't take that from me.

Lap. Why, Sir, you will lose twice the value of your contract before you know how to turn yourself; and if you have no value for liberty, yet consider, Sir, such is the great goodness of our laws, that a prison is one of the dearest places you can live in.

Love. Ten thousand pounds!—No—I'll be hang'd, I'll be hang'd!

Lap. Suppose, Sir, it were possible (not that I believe it is) but suppose it were possible to make her abate a little; suppose one could bring her to eight thousand—

Love. Eight thousand devils take her—

Lap. But, dear Sir, consider; nay, consider immediately; for every minute you lose, you lose a sum—Let me beg you, intreat you, my dear good Master, let me prevail on you not to be ruin'd. Be resolute, Sir, consider every guinea you give saves you a score.

Love. Well, if she will consent to, to, to eight hundred—But try, do, try if you can make her 'bate any thing of that—if you can—you shall have a twentieth part of what she 'bates for yourself.

Lap. Why, Sir, if I could get you off at eight thousand, you ought to leap out of your skin for joy.

Love. Would I were out of my skin—

Lap. You will have more reason to wish so, when you are in the hands of bailiffs for your wife's debts—

Love. Why was I begotten! Why was I born! Why was I brought up! Why was I not knock'd o'th' head, before I knew the value of money!

Lap. [*Knocking without.*] So, so, more duns, I suppose—Go but into the kitchen, Sir, or the hall, and it will have a better effect on you than all I can say.

Love. What have I brought myself to! what shall I do! part with eight thousand pounds! misery, destruction, beggary, prisons! but then on the other side are wife, ruin, chains, slavery, torment! I shall run distracted either way! [*Exit Love* old.

Lap. Ah! would we could once prove you so, you old covetous good-for-nothing!

Enter Mariana.

Mar. Well, what success?

Lap. It is impossible to tell: he is just gone into the kitchen, where, if he is not frighten'd into our design, I shall begin to despair. They say fear will make a coward brave; but nothing can make him generous: the very fear of losing all he is worth will scarce bring him to part with a penny.

Mar. And have you acquainted neither Frederick nor Harriet with my intentions?

Lap. Neither, I assure you. Ah, Madam, had I not been able to have kept a secret, I had never brought about those affairs that I have. Were I not secret, Lud have mercy upon many a virtuous woman's reputation in this town!

Mar. And don't you think I have kept my real intentions very secret?

Lap. From every one but me, I believe you have. I assure you I knew them long before you sent for me this afternoon to discover them to me.

Mar. But could you bring him to no terms, no proposals? Did he make no offer?

Lap. It must be all done at once, and while you are by.

Mar. So you think he must see me, to give any thing to be rid of me.

Lap. Hush, hush, I hear him coming again.

Enter Lovegold.

Love. I am undone! I am undone! I am eat up! I am devour'd! I have an army of cooks in my house.

Lap. Dear Madam, consider, I know eight thousand pounds are a trifle. I know they are nothing; my master can very well afford them; they will make no hole in his purse: and if you should stand out, you will get more.

Love. [*Putting his hand before Lappet's mouth.*] You lie, you lie, you lie, you lie, you lie. She never could get more, never should get more: it is more than I am worth; it is an immense sum; and I will be starv'd, drown'd, shot, hang'd, burnt, before I part with a penny of it.

Lap. For Heaven's sake, Sir, you will ruin all—
Madam,

Madam, let me beg you, intreat you, to 'bate these two thousand pounds. Suppose a law-suit should be the consequence, I know my master would be cast; I know it would cost him an immense sum of money, and that he would pay the charges of both in the end; but you might be kept out of it a long time. Eight thousand pounds now, are better than ten five years hence.

Mar. No, the satisfaction of my revenge on a man who basely departs from his word, will make me amends for the delay; and whatever I suffer, as long as I know his ruin will be the consequence, I shall be easy.

Love. Oh, bloody-minded wretch!

Lap. Why, Sir, since she insists on it, what does it signify? you know you are in her power, and it will be only throwing away more money to be compell'd to it at last: get rid of her at once: what are two thousand pounds? why, Sir, the Court of Chancery will eat it up for a breakfast. It has been given for a mistress, and will you not give it to be rid of a wife?

[*Whispers Lovegold.*

Enter Thomas and James.

[*Lovegold and Lappet talk apart.*

Tho. Madam, the music are come which your ladyship order'd; and most of the company will be here immediately.

James. Where will your ladyship be pleas'd the servants shall eat? for there is no room in the house that will be large enough to entertain 'em.

Mar. Then beat down the partition, and turn two rooms into one.

James. There is no service in the house proper for the desert, Madam.

Mar. Send immediately to the great china shop in the Strand for the finest that is there.

[*Exeunt Servants.*

Love. How! and will you swear a robbery against her? that she robb'd me of what I shall give her?

Lap. Depend on it, Sir.

Love. I'll break open a bureau, to make it look the more likely.

Lap. Do so, Sir, but lose no time: give it her this moment.

moment. Madam, my master has consented, and, if you have the contract, he is ready to pay the money. Be sure to break open the bureau, Sir.

Mar. Here is the contract.

Love. I'll fetch the money. It is all I am worth in the world. *[Exit Lovegold.]*

Mar. Sure he will never be brought to it yet.

Lap. I warrant him. But you are to pay dearer for it than you imagine; for I am to swear a robbery against you. What will you give me, Madam, to buy off my evidence?

Mar. And is it possible that the old rogue would consent to such villany?

Lap. Ay, Madam, for half that sum he would hang half the town. But, truly, I can never be made amends for all the pains I have taken on your account. Were I to receive a single guinea a lye, for every one I have told this day, it would make me a pretty tolerable fortune. Ah! Madam! what a pity it is that a woman of my excellent talent should be confined to so low a sphere of life as I am! had I been born a great lady, what a deal of good should I have done in the world!

Enter Lovegold.

Love. Here, here they are—all in bank-notes—all the money I am worth in the world.—(I have sent for a constable; she must not go out of sight before we have her taken into custody) *[Aside to Lappet.]*

Lap. *[To Lovegold.]* You have done very wisely.

Mar. There, Sir, is your contract. And now, Sir, I have nothing to do but to make myself as easy as I can in my loss.

Enter Frederick, Clermont, and Harriet.

Love. Where is that you promised me? where is my treasure?

Cler. Here, Sir, is all the treasure I am worth. A treasure which the whole world's worth should not purchase.

Love. Give me the money, Sir, give me the money; I say give me the money you stole from me.

Cler. I understand you not.

Love. Did you not confess you robb'd me of my treasure?

Cler.

Cler. This, Sir, is the ineffimable treasure I meant! Your daughter, Sir, has this day blest me by making me her husband.

Love. How! O wicked vile wretch! to run away thus with a pitiful mean fellow, thy father's clerk!

Cler. Think not your family disgrac'd, Sir. I am at least your equal born; and tho' my fortune be not so large, as for my dearest Harriet's sake, I wish, still it is such as will put it out of your power to make us miserable.

Love. O my money, my money, my money!

Fred. If this lady does not make you amends for the loss of your money, resign over all pretensions in her to me, and I will engage to get it restor'd to you.

Love. How firrah! are you a confederate? Have you help'd to rob me?

Fred. Softly, Sir, or you shall never see your guineas again.

Love. I resign her over to you entirely, and may you both starve together! So, go fetch my gold——

Mar. You are easily prevail'd upon, I see, to resign a right which you have not. But were I to resign myself, it would hardly be the man's fortune to starve, whose wife brought him ten thousand pounds.

Love. Bear witness she has confess'd she has the money; and I shall prove she stole it from me. She has broken open my bureau: Lappet is my evidence.

Lap. I hope I have all your pardons, and particularly yours, Madam, whom I have most injur'd.

Love. A fig for her pardon; you are doing a right action.

Lap. Then, if there was any robbery, you must have robb'd yourself. This lady can only be a receiver of stolen goods; for I saw you give her the money with your hands.

Love. How! I! You! What! What!

Lap. And I must own it, with shame I must own it—that the money you gave her in exchange for the contract I promis'd to swear she had stolen from you.

Cler. Is it possible Mr. Lovegold could be capable of such an action as this?

Love. I am undone, undone, undone!

Fred. No, Sir, your three thousand guineas are safe yet;

yet; depend upon it, within an hour, you shall find them in the same place they were first deposited. 'I thought to have purchas'd a reprieve with them; but 'I find my fortune has of itself bestow'd that on me.'

Love. Give 'em me, give 'em me, this instant—but then the ten thousand, where are they?

Mar. Where they ought to be, in the hands of one who I think deserves them. [*Gives them to Frederick.*] You see, Sir, I had no design to the prejudice of your family. Nay, I have prov'd the best friend you ever had; for I presume, you are now thoroughly cur'd of your longing for a young wife.

Love. Sirrah, give me my notes, give me my notes.

Fred. You must excuse me, Sir; I can part with nothing I receive from this lady.

Love. Then I will go to law with that lady and you, and all of you; for I will have them again, if law, or justice, or injustice, will give them me.

Cler. Be pacified, Sir; I think the lady has acted nobly, in giving that back again into your family, which she might have carried out of it.

Love. My family be hang'd: if I am robb'd, I don't care who robs me. I would as soon hang my son as another—and I will hang him if he does not restore me all I have lost: for I would not give half the sum to save the whole world—I will go and employ all the lawyers in town; for I will have my money again, or never sleep more. [*Exit.*]

Fred. I am resolv'd we will get the better of him now. But O Mariana! your generosity is much greater in bestowing this sum than my happiness in receiving it. I am an unconscionable beggar, and shall never be satisfied while you have any thing to bestow.

Mar. Do you hear him——

Har. Yes, and begin to approve him—for your late behaviour has convinc'd me.

Mar. My dear girl, no more; 'you have frighten'd me already so much to-day, that rather than venture a second lecture, I would do whatever you wish'd—' So, Sir, if I do bestow all on you, here is the lady you are to thank for it—

Har. Well, this I will say, when you do a good-natur'd thing, you have the prettiest way of doing it. And now,

now, Mariana, I am ready to ask your pardon for all I said to-day.

Mar. Dear Harriet, no apologies: all you said I deserved.

Enter Ramilie.

Lap. Treaties are going on, on both sides, while you and I seem forgotten.

Ramil. Why, have we not done them all the service we can? What farther have they to do with us?

—Sir, there are some people in masquerade habits without.

Mar. Some I sent for to assist in my design on your father: I think we will give them admittance, tho' we have done without 'em.

All. Oh! by all means.

Fred. Mrs. Lappet, be assur'd I have a just sense of your favours, and both you and Ramilie shall find my gratitude.

[Dance here.]

Fred. Dear Clermont, be satisfied I shall make no peace with the old gentleman, in which you shall not be included. I hope my sister will prove a fortune equal to your great deserts.

Cler. While I am enabled to support her in any affluence equal to her desires, I shall desire no more. From what I have seen lately, I think riches are rather to be fear'd than wish'd; at least, I am sure, avarice, which too often attends wealth, is a greater evil than any that is found in poverty. Misery is generally the end of all vice; but it is the very mark at which avarice seems to aim: the Miser endeavours to be wretched.

He boards eternal care within his purse;

And what he wishes most, proves most his curse.



EPILOGUE,

Written by COLLY CIBBER, Esq;

OUR author's sure bewitch'd! the senseless rogue
Insists no good play wants an Epilogue.
Suppose that true, says I, what's that to this?
Is yours a good one?—No, but Moliere's is,
He cry'd, and zounds! no epilogue was tack'd to his. }
Besides, your modern epilogues, said he,
Are but ragouts of smut and ribaldry.
Where the false jests are dwindled to so few,
There's scarce one double entendre left that's new.
Nor would I in that lovely circle raise
One blush, to gain a thousand coxcombs praise.
Then for the threadbare joke of cit and wit,
Whose fore-known rhyme is echo'd from the pit, }
Till of their laugh the galleries are bit.
Then to reproach the critics with ill-nature,
And charge their malice to his stinging satire:
And thence appealing to the nicer boxes,
Tho' talking stuff might dash the Drury doxies.
If these, he cry'd, the choice ingredients be
For epilogues, they shall have none for me.
Lord, Sir, says I, the gallery will so bawl;
Let 'em, he cry'd, a bad one's worse than none at all.
Madam, these things than you I'm more expert in, }
Nor do I see no epilogue much hurt in,
Zounds! when the play is ended—drop the curtain.

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Act V.

SUSPICIOUS HUSBAND.

Scene I.



Robinson del.

J. Taylor sculp.

M^{rs} BADDELEY in the Character of **M^{rs} STRICTLAND.**

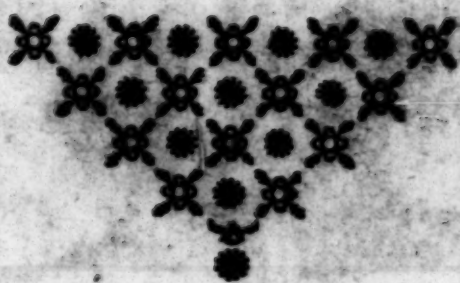
I say M^{rs} Strictland I would only —

Published July 6th 1776. by J. Lowndes & Partners.

THE
SUSPICIOUS HUSBAND,
A
COMEDY,

WRITTEN BY
DR. HOADLY.

Marked with the Variations of the
MANAGERS BOOKS,
AT THE
Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane,



LONDON:
PRINTED FOR T. CASLON, T. LOWNDES,
W. NICOLL, S. BLADON, AND T. BECKET.

M.DCC.LXXVI.



The Reader is desired to observe, that the Passages omitted in the Representation at the Theatres are here preserved, and marked with inverted Commas; as in Line 42 in Page 14, to Line 9 in Page 15.—Also, The Additions made at the Theatres are distinguished by *Italics* between inverted Commas; as at Line 20 in Page 9.

TO THE
K I N G.

SIR,

YOUR Majesty's goodness in permitting your Royal Name to stand before the following piece, is an instance of the greatest condescension of a great mind. And this permission, after having honoured the performance of it with your Royal Presence, the more sensibly touches me, as it will naturally lead every one to this reflection, That so great an honour would not have been allowed it, had it not appeared free from all offence against the rules of good manners and decency.

Thus, while your Majesty sits as a watchful arbiter of the greatest affairs that ever perplexed Europe, You can descend to the innocent amusements of life, and take a pleasure in favouring an attempt to add to their number.

We see with joy, in your Majesty, an undeniable proof, that the true greatness and lustre of a Prince is founded, not upon the magnificence of pomp and shew, and power, but upon the whole tenor of a conduct formed for securing and confirming the rights and happiness of his subjects. This, being built upon public facts, will always remain plainly legible in the annals of history, when the traces of the most delicate flattery shall be all lost and gone.

When the records of our country shall barely tell the world the glorious appearance in this nation, upon a late trying occasion; and say—That upon a violent attack made upon your crown, all orders and degrees, all sects and parties amongst us, rose up, as

one man ; not contenting themselves to offer their lives and fortunes in the sounds of formal addresses ; but actually pouring out their treasures, and hazarding their persons—That your whole people did not think themselves safe without your safety ; nor their religion, laws, and properties secure, but in the security of your Royal Person and Government—When this shall be told—This alone, this voice of the public, expressed in deeds, will be the highest panegyric ; greater and truer praise, than all the words which invention and art can put together—But I forgot myself, and my duty.

I ought not, upon the present occasion, to interrupt your cares for the public, any further, than to express my deep sense of your Royal favour and condescension ; and to send up my warmest vows—That your Majesty may long enjoy the fruits of a conduct in government, which is the security to your subjects of all that is valuable upon earth !—That you may live, through a course of many years, the delight of your happy people ; the example to all the princes around you, of political truth and justice, superior to all the arts of fraud and perfidy—And that the succession to the crown of these realms, in your Royal Line, may never fail to establish and continue the blessings we enjoy, to our latest posterity. I am,

May it please Your Majesty,

Your Majesty's most devoted and

obedient Subject and Servant,

BENJAMIN HOADLY.

P R O L O G U E,

Written by Mr. GARRICK.

*WHILE other culprits brave it to the last,
Nor beg for mercy till the judgment's past :
Poets alone, as conscious of their crimes,
Open their trials with imploring rhymes.
Thus cramm'd with flattery and low submission,
Each trite dull prologue is the bard's petition.
A stale device to calm the critics fury,
And bribe at once the judges and the jury.
But what avail such poor repeated arts ?
The whimp'ring scribbler ne'er can touch your hearts :
Nor ought an ill-tim'd pity to take place —
Fast as they rise destroy th' increasing race :
The vermin else will run the nation o'er —
By saving one, you breed a million more.
Tho' disappointed authors rail and rage
At fancy'd parties, and a senseless age,
Yet still has Justice triumph'd on the stage.
Thus speaks and thinks the author of to-day,
And saying this, has little more to say.
He asks no friend his partial zeal to shew,
Nor fears the groundless censures of a foe :
He knows no friendship can protect the fool,
Nor will an audience be a party's tool.
'Tis inconsistent with a free-born spirit
To side with folly, or to injure merit.
By your decision he must fall or stand,
Nor, tho' he feels the lash, will blame the hand.*

Dramatis Personæ, 1776.

M E N.

Mr. Strickland

Frankly

Bellamy

Ranger

Jack Meggot

Buckle

Tester

Servant to Ranger

Simon

Chairmen, Footmen, &c.

Mrs. Strickland

Clarinda

Jacintha

Lucetta

Landlady

Milliner

Maid

At Drury Lane.

Mr. AICKIN.

Mr. PALMER.

Mr. PACKER.

Mr. GARRICK.

Mr. DOBB.

Mr. WRIGHT.

Mr. BURTON.

Mr. EVERARD.

Mr. WRIGHTON.

Covent Garden.

Mr. CLARKE.

Mr. LEWIS.

Mr. WROUGHTON.

Mr. WOODWARD.

Mr. LEE LEWIS.

Mr. CUSHION.

Mr. QUICK.

Mr. THOMPSON.

Mr. QUICK.

W O M E N.

Mrs. BADDELEY.

Mrs. ABINGTON.

Mrs. YOUNGE.

Mrs. DAVIES.

Mrs. BRADSHAW.

Miss JARRAT.

Mrs. W. PALMER.

Mrs. MATTOCKS.

Mrs. BULKELEY.

Mrs. LESSINGHAM.

Mrs. GREEN.

Mrs. POUSSIN.

Mrs. INVILL.

Mrs. WHITE.

8 C E N T S.

L O N D O N.

THE
SUSPICIOUS HUSBAND.

ACT I. SCENE Ranger's Chambers in the Temple.

A knocking is heard at the door for some time; when Ranger enters, having let himself in.

ONCE more I am got safe to the Temple—let me reflect a little—I have set up all night. I have my head full of bad wine, and the noise of oaths, dice, and the damn'd tingling of tavern bells; my spirits jaded, and my eyes sunk in my head: and all this for the conversation of a company of fellows I despise. Their wit lies only in obscenity, their mirth in noise, and their delight in a box and dice. Honest Ranger, take my word for it, thou art a mighty silly fellow. [*Enter Servant, with a wig dressed.*] Where have you been, rascal? If I had not had the key in my pocket, I must have waited at the door in this dainty dress.

Serv. I was only below combing out your honour's wig.

Rang. Well, give me my cap.—[*Pulling off his wig.*] Why, how like a raking dog do you look, compar'd to that spruce, sober gentleman?—Go, you batter'd devil, and be made fit to be seen.

[*Throwing his wig to the servant.*]

Serv. Cod, my master's very merry this morning.

[*Exit.*]

Rang. And now for the law. [*Sits down and reads.*]

Tell me no more, I am deceiv'd,

That Clot's false and common;

By heav'n I all along believ'd

She was a very woman.

As such I lik'd, as such carest'd;

She still was constant when possess'd:

She could do more for no man.

Honest Congreve was a man after my own heart. [*Servants pass over the stage.*] Have you been for the money this morning, as I order'd you?

8 THE SUSPICIOUS HUSBAND.

Serv. No, Sir, you bade me go before you was up—I did not know your honour meant before you went to bed.

Rang. None of your jokes, I pray; but to business—Go to the coffee-house, and enquire if there has been any letter or message left for me.

Serv. I shall, Sir.

[Exit.

Rang. [repeat.] *You think she's false, I'm sure she's kind,
I take her body, you her mind,
Which has the better bargain?*

Oh, that I had such a soft, deceitful fair, to lull my senses to their desir'd sleep—[Knocking at the door.] Come in. [Enter Simon.] O, master Simon, is it you? How long have you been in town?

Simon. Just come, Sir, and but for a little time neither; and yet I have as many messages as if we were to stay the whole year round. Here they are, all of them. [Pulls out a number of cards.] And among them one for your honour.

Rang. [Reads.] *Clarinda's compliments to her cousin Ranger, and should be glad to see him for ever so little a time that he can be spar'd from the more weighty business of the law—*Ha! ha! ha! the same merry girl I ever knew her.

Sim. My lady is never sad, Sir. [Knocking at the door.

Rang. Pr'ythee, Simon, open the door. [Enter milliner.] Well, child—and who are you?

Milli. Sir, my mistress gives her service to you, and has sent you home the linen you bespoke.

Rang. Well, Simon, my service to your lady, and let her know I will most certainly wait upon her—I am a little busy, Simon—and so—

Simon. Ah, you're a wag, master Ranger, you're a wag—but mum for that.

Rang. I swear, my dear, you have the prettiest pair of eyes—the loveliest pouting lips—I never saw you before.

Milli. No, Sir! I was always in the shop.

Rang. Were you so? well, and what does your mistress say?—The devil fetch me, child, you look'd so prettily, that I could not mind one word you said.

Milli. Lard, Sir, you are such another gentleman! Why, she says, she is sorry she could not send them sooner. Shall I lay them down?

Rang.

'THE SUSPICIOUS HUSBAND. 9

Rang. No, child. Give 'em to me.—Dear little smiling angel—— [Catches and kisses her.]

Milli. I beg, Sir, you would be civil.

Rang. Civil! Egad, I think I am very civil.

[Kisses her again.]

Enter Servant, and Bellamy.

Serv. Sir, Mr. Bellamy.

Rang. Damn your impertinence—O, Mr. Bellamy, your Servant.

Milli. What shall I say to my mistress?

Rang. Bid her make half a dozen more; but be sure you bring them home yourself. [Exit milliner.] Pshaw! Pox! Mr. Bellamy, how should you like to be serv'd so yourself?

Bella. How can you, Ranger, for a minute's pleasure, give an innocent girl the pain of heart I am confident she felt?—There was a modest blush upon her cheek convinces me she is honest.

Rang. May be so. I was resolved to try, however, "had not you interrupted the experiment."

Bella. Fy, Ranger—Will you never think?

Rang. Yes, but I can't be always thinking. The law is a damnable dry study, Mr. Bellamy, and without something now and then to amuse and relax, it would be too much for my brain, I promise ye—But I am a mighty sober fellow grown—Here have I been at it these three hours—but the wenches will never let me alone.

Bella. Three hours!—Why do you usually study in such shoes and stockings?

Rang. Rat your inquisitive eyes. *Ex pede Herculem.* Egad you have me. The truth is, I am but this moment return'd from the tavern. What, Frankly, here too!

Enter Frankly.

Frank. My boy, Ranger, I am heartily glad to see you: Bellamy, let me embrace you; you are the person I want. I have been at your lodgings, and was directed hither.

Rang. It is to him then I am oblig'd for this visit: but with all my heart—he is the only man, to whom I don't care how much I am oblig'd.

Bella. Your humble servant, Sir.

Frank. You know, Ranger, I want no inducement

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to be with you. But—You look sadly—What—No merciless jade has—has she?

Rang. No, no. Sound as a roach, my lad. I only got a little too much liquor last night, which I have not slept off yet.

Bella. Thus, Frankly, it is every day. All the morning his head aches, at noon he begins to clear up, towards evening he is good company, and all night he is carefully providing for the same course the next day.

Rang. Why, I must own, my ghostly father, I did relapse a little last night, just to furnish out a decent confession for the day.

Frank. And he is now doing penance for it. Were you his confessor, indeed, you could not well desire more.

Rang. Charles, he sets up for a confessor with the worst grace in the world. Here has he been reproving me for being but decently civil to my milliner. Plague! because the coldness of his constitution makes him insensible of a fine woman's charms, every body else must be so too.

Bella. I am no less sensible of their charms than you are, though I cannot kiss every woman I meet, or fall in love, as you call it, with every face which has the bloom of youth upon it. I would only have you a little more frugal of your pleasures.

Frank. My dear friend, this is very pretty talking! But let me tell you, it is in the power of the very first glance from a fine woman, utterly to disconcert all your philosophy.

Bella. It must be from a fine woman then, and not such as are generally reputed so—And it must be a thorough acquaintance with her too, that will ever make an impression on my heart.

Rang. Would I could see it once! For when a man has been all his life hoarding up a stock, without allowing himself common necessities; it tickles me to the soul to see him lay it all out upon a wrong bottom, and become bankrupt at last.

Bella. Well, I don't care how soon you see it. For the minute I find a woman capable of friendship, love, and tenderness, with good-sense enough to be always easy, and good-natur'd enough to like me, I will immediately

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immediately put it to the trial, which of us shall have the greatest share of happiness from the sex, you or I.

Rang. By marrying her, I suppose! capable of friendship, love, and tenderness, ha, ha, ha! That a man of your sense should talk so. If she be capable of love, 'tis all I require of my mistress; and as every woman, who is young, is capable of love, I am very reasonably in love with every young woman I meet—My lord Coke, in a case I read this morning, speaks my sense.

Both. My lord Coke!

Rang. Yes, my lord Coke. What he says of one woman, I say of the whole sex, *I take their bodies, you their minds; which has the better bargain?*

Frank. There is no arguing with so great a lawyer. Suppose therefore we adjourn the debate to some other time. I have some serious business with Mr. Bellamy, and you want sleep, I am sure.

Rang. Sleep! mere loss of time, and hindrance of business—We men of spirit, Sir, are above it.

Bella. Whither shall we go?

Frank. Into the Park. My chariot is at the door.

Bella. Then if my servant calls, you'll send him after us. [*Exeunt.*]

Rang. I will [*Looking on the card.*] Clarinda's compliments—A pox of this head of mine! never once to ask where she was to be found. It's plain she is not one of us, or I should not have been so remiss in my enquiries—No matter—I shall meet her in my walks.

Servant enters.

Serv. There is no letter nor message, Sir.

Rang. Then my things to dress. [*Exit.*]

S C E N E *a chamber.*

Enter Mrs. Strickland, and Jacintha, meeting.

Mrs. Strick. Good-morrow, my dear Jacintha.

Jacin. Good-morrow to you, Madam. I have brought my work, and intend to sit with you this morning. I hope you have got the better of your fatigue. Where is Clarinda? I should be glad if she wou'd come, and work with us.

Mrs. Strick. She work! She is too fine a lady to do any thing. She is not stirring yet—we must let her

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have her rest. People of her waste of spirits require more time to recruit again.

Jacin. It is pity she should be ever tir'd with what is so agreeable to every body else. I am prodigiously pleas'd with her company.

Mrs. Stri&t. And when you are better acquainted, you will be still more pleas'd with her. You must rally her upon her partner at Bath; for, I fancy, part of her rest has been disturb'd on his account.

Jacin. Was he really a pretty fellow?

Mrs. Stri&t. That I can't tell. I did not dance myself, and so did not much mind him. You must have the whole story from herself.

Jacin. Oh, I warrant ye, I get it all out. None are so proper to make discoveries in love, as those who are in the secret themselves.

Enter Lucetta.

Lucet. Madam, Mr. Stri&tland is inquiring for you. Here has been Mr. Buckle with a letter from his master, which has made him very angry.

Jacin. Mr. Bellamy said, indeed, he would try him once more, but I fear it will prove in vain. Tell your master I am here. [*Exit Lucetta.*] What signifies fortune when it only makes us slaves to other people?

Mrs. Stri&t. Do not be uneasy, my Jacintha. You shall always find a friend in me: but as for Mr. Stri&tland, I know not what ill temper hangs about him lately. Nothing satisfies him. You saw how he received us when we came off our journey. Though Clarinda was so good company, he was barely civil to her, and downright rude to me.

Jacin. I cannot help saying, I did observe it.

Mrs. Stri&t. I saw you did. Hush! he's here.

Enter Mr. Stri&tland.

Mr. Stri&t. Oh, your servant, Madam! Here, I have received a letter from Mr. Bellamy, wherein he desires I would once more hear what he has to say——You know my sentiments——Nay, so does he.

Jacin. For Heaven's sake consider, Sir, this is no new affair, no sudden start of passion——We have known each other long. My father valued and lov'd him, and I am sure were he alive, I should have his consent.

Mr. Stri&t. Don't tell me. Your father would not have

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have you marry against his will; neither will I against mine: I am your father now.

Jacin. And you take a fatherly care of me.

Mr. Strick. I wish I had never had any thing to do with you.

Jacin. You may easily get rid of the trouble.

Mr. Strick. By listening, I suppose, to the young gentleman's proposals.

Jacin. Which are very reasonable in my opinion.

Mr. Strick. Oh, very modest ones truly; and a very modest gentleman he is that proposes them! A fool, to expect a lady of thirty thousand pounds fortune, should, by the care and prudence of her guardian, be thrown away upon a young fellow not worth three hundred a year. He thinks being in love is an excuse for this; but I am not in love. What does he think will excuse me?

Mrs. Strick. Well, but Mr. Strickland, I think the gentleman should be heard.

Mr. Strick. Well, well, seven o'clock's the time, and if the man has had the good fortune, since I saw him last, to persuade some body or other to give him a better estate, I give him my consent—not else. His servant waits below. You may tell him, I shall be at home. [*Exit Jacintha.*] But where is your friend, your other half, all this while? I thought you could not have breath'd a minute without your Clarinda.

Mrs. Strick. Why the truth is, I was going to see what makes her keep her chamber so long.

Mr. Strick. Look ye, Mrs. Strickland, you have been asking me for money this morning. In plain terms, not one shilling shall pass through these fingers, till you have clear'd my house of this Clarinda.

Mrs. Strick. How can her innocent gaiety have offend-ed you? She is a woman of honour, and has as many good qualities——

Mr. Strick. As women of honour generally have, I know it, and therefore am uneasy.

Mrs. Strick. But, Sir——

Mr. Strick. But, Madam—— Clarinda, nor e'er a rake of fashion in England, shall live in my family to debauch it.

Mrs. Strick. Sir, she treated me with so much civility in the country, that I thought I could not do less than
invite

THE SUSPICIOUS HUSBAND. 15

Ranger has honour, I am not in humour to be laughed at. I must have one that will bear with my impertinence, soothe me into hope, and, like a friend indeed, with tenderness advise me.

Bella. I thought you appeared more grave than usual.

Frank. O Bellamy! my soul is full of joy, of pain, hope, despair, and ecstasy, that no word but love is capable of expressing what I feel.

Bella. Is love the secret Ranger is not fit to hear? In my mind, he would prove the more able counsellor. And is all the gay indifference of my friend at last reduced to love?

Frank. Even so———Never was prude more resolute in chastity and ill-nature, than I was fix'd in indifference; but love has rais'd me from that inactive state above the being of a man.

Bella. Faith, Charles, I begin to think it has———But pray, bring this rapture into order a little, and tell me regularly, how, where, and when.

Frank. If I was not most unreasonably in love, those horrid questions would stop my mouth at once. But as I am arm'd against reason—I answer.—at Bath——on Tuesday, she danced and caught me.

Bella. Danced!———and was that all? But who is she? What is her name? her fortune? where does she live?

Frank. Hold! hold! not so many hard questions. Have a little mercy. I know but little of her, that's certain.——But all I do know you shall have. That evening was the first of her appearing at Bath. The moment I saw her, I resolved to ask the favour of her hand. But the easy freedom with which she gave it, and her unaffected good-humour during the whole night, gain'd such a power over my heart, as none of her sex could ever boast before. I waited on her home, and the next morning, when I went to pay the usual compliments, the bird was flown. She had set out for London two hours before, and in a chariot and fix—
you rogue.

Bella. But was it her own, Charles?

Frank. That I don't know; but it looks better than being drag'd to town in the stage. That day and the
next

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next I spent in inquiries. I waited on the ladies who came with her. They knew nothing of her. So without learning either her name or fortune, I e'en call'd for my boots, and rode post after her.

Bella. And how do you find yourself after your journey?

Frank. Why, as yet, I own, I am but upon a cold scent. But a woman of her sprightliness and gentility cannot but frequent all public places; and when once she is found, the pleasure of the chace will over-pay the pains of rousing her.—O Bellamy! there was something peculiarly charming in her, that seem'd to claim my further acquaintance: and if in the other more familiar parts of life she shines with that superior lustre, and at last I win her to my arms, how shall I bless my resolution in pursuing her!

Bella. But if at last she should prove unworthy—

Frank. I would endeavour to forget her.

Bella. Promise me that, Charles, [*Takes his band.*] and I allow——But we are interrupted.

Enter Jack Meggot.

Jack Meg. Whom have we here? my old friend Frankly? Thou art grown a mere antique since I saw thee? How hast thou done these five hundred years?

Frank. Even as you see me; well, and at your service ever.

Jack Meg. Ha! who's that?

Frank. A friend of mine. Mr. Bellamy, this is Jack Meggot, Sir, as honest a fellow as any in life.

Jack Meg. Pho! prithee! pox! Charles,——Don't be silly——Sir, I am your humble—Any one, who is a friend of my Frankly's, I am proud of embracing.

Bella. Sir, I shall endeavour to deserve your civility.

Jack Meg. O Sir!—Well! Charles, what! dumb? Come, come; you may talk, though you have nothing to say, as I do—Let us hear, where have you been?

Frank. Why for this last week, Jack, I have been at Bath.

Jack Meg. Bath! the most ridiculous place in life!—amongst tradesmen's wives that hate their husbands, and people of quality that had rather go to the devil than stay at home. People of no taste—no goût—and
for

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for *divertissimens*, if it were not for the puppet-show, *La Virtu* would be dead amongst them.—— But the news; Charles——the ladies——I fear, your time hung heavy on your hands, by the small stay you made there.

Frank. Faith, and so it did, Jack. The ladies are grown such ideots in love—— The cards have so debauch'd their five senses, that Love, almighty Love, himself is utterly neglected.

Jack Meg. It is the strangest thing in life, but it is just so with us abroad. Faith! Charles! to tell you a secret, which I don't care if all the world knows, I am almost surfeited with the services of the ladies; the modest ones I mean. The vast variety of duties they expect—as dressing up to the fashion, losing fashionably, keeping fashionable hours, drinking fashionable liquors, and fifty other such irregular niceties, so ruin a man's pocket and constitution, that, foregad! he must have the estate of a duke, and the strength of a gondolier, who would list himself into their service!

Frank. A free confession truly, Jack, for one of your coat.

Bella. The ladies are oblig'd to you.

Enter Buckle, with a letter to Bellamy.

Jac. Meg. Oh Lard! Charles! I have had the greatest misfortune in life, since I saw you——Poor Otho; that I brought from Rome with me, is dead.

Frank. Well! well! get you another, and all will be well again.

Jack Meg. No! the rogue broke me so much China, and gnaw'd my Spanish leather shoes so filthily, that when he was dead, I began not to endure him.

Bella. Exactly at seven! run back, and assure him I will not fail. [*Exit Buckle.*] Dead? Pray, who was the gentleman?

Jack Meg. This gentleman was my monkey, Sir—an odd sort of a fellow that used to divert me—and pleased every body so at that Rome; that he always made one in our *conversationi*—But, Mr. Bellamy, I saw a servant: I hope no engagement; for you two positively shall dine with me. I have the finest macaroni in life. Oblige me so far.

Bella. Sir—your servant! what say you, Frankly?

Jack Meg. Pho! Pox! Charles! you shall go. My
aunts

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aunts think you begin to neglect them; and old maids, you know, are the most jealous creatures in life.

Frank. Ranger swears they can't be maids, they are so good-natur'd. Well! I agree, on condition I may eat what I please, and go away just when I will.

Jack Meg. Ay! ay! you shall do just what you will. But how shall we do? My post chaise won't carry us all.

Frank. My chariot is here; and I will conduct Mr. Bellamy.

Bella. Mr. Meggot — I beg pardon, I can't possibly dine out of town! I have an engagement early in the evening.

Jack Meg. Out of town! no, my dear, I live just by. I see one of the Dilettanti, I would not miss speaking to for the universe. And so I expect you at three.

[Exit.

Frank. Ha! ha! ha! and so you thought you had at least fifty miles to go post for a spoonful of Macaroni.

Bell. I suppose then, he is just come out of the country.

Frank. Nor that neither. I would venture a wager, from his own house hither, or to an auction or two of old dirty pictures, is the utmost of his travels to-day: Or he may have been in pursuit, perhaps, of a new cargo of Venetian toothpicks.

Bell. A special acquaintance I have made to-day!

Frank. For all this, Bellamy, he has a heart worthy your friendship. He spends his estate freely, and you cannot oblige him more, than by shewing him how he can be of service to you.

Bell. Now you say something. It is the heart, Frankly, I value in a man.

Frank. Right! — and there is a heart even in a woman's breast that is worth the purchase, or my judgment has deceiv'd me. Dear Bellamy, I know your concern for me. See her first, and then blame me, if you can.

Bella. So far from blaming you, Charles, that, if my endeavours can be serviceable, I will beat the bushes with you.

Frank. That I am afraid will not do. For you know less of her than I. But if in your walks you meet a
fisher

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finer woman than ordinary, let her not escape till I have seen her.—Wherefoe'er she is, she cannot long lie hid.

[*Exeunt*]

ACT II. SCENE *Saint James's Park.*

Enter Clarinda, Jacintha, and Mrs. Strickland.

Jacin. **A**Y! ay! we both stand condemn'd out of our own mouths.

Clar. Why—I cannot but own—I never had thought of any man that troubled me, but of him.

Mrs. Strick. Then I dare swear, by this time, you heartily repent your leaving Bath so soon.

Clar. Indeed you are mistaken. I have not had one scruple since.

Jac. Why, what one inducement can he have ever to think of you again?

Clar. Oh! the greatest of all inducements, curiosity. Let me assure you, a woman's surest hold over a man is to keep him in uncertainty. As soon as ever you put him out of doubt, you put him out of your power: But when once a woman has awak'd his curiosity, she may lead him a dance of many a troublesome mile without the least fear of losing him at last.

Jacin. Now do I heartily wish he may have spirit enough to follow, and use you as you deserve. Such a spirit, with but a little knowledge of our sex, might put that heart of yours into a strange flutter.

Clar. I care not how soon. I long to meet with such a fellow. Our modern beaux are such jointed babies in love, they have no feeling. They are intirely insensible either of pain or pleasure, but from their own dear persons: and according as we flatter or affront their beauty, they admire or forsake ours. They are not worthy even of our displeasure; and, in short, abusing them is but so much ill-nature merely thrown away. But the man of sense, who values himself upon his high abilities, or the man of wit, who thinks a woman beneath his conversation—to see such the subjects of our power, the slaves of our frowns and smiles, is glorious indeed!

Mrs.

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Mrs. Strick. No man of sense, or wit either, if he be truly so, ever did, or ever can think a woman of merit beneath his wisdom to converse with.

Jacin. Nor will such a woman value herself upon making such a lover uneasy.

Clar. Amazing! Why, every woman can give ease? You cannot be in earnest.

Mrs. Strick. I can assure you she is, and has put in practice the doctrine she has been teaching.

Clar. Impossible! Who ever heard the name of Love mention'd without an idea of torment? But pray let us hear.

Jacin. Nay, there is nothing to hear that I know of.

Clar. So I suspected, indeed! The novel is not likely to be long, when the lady is so well prepar'd for the *denouement*.

Jacin. The novel, as you call it, is not so short as you may imagine. I and my spark have been long acquainted. As he was continually with my father, I soon perceiv'd he lov'd me, and the manner of his expressing that love was what pleas'd and won me most.

Clar. Well! and how was it? The old bait? Flattery? Dear flattery, I warrant ye.

Jacin. No, indeed.—I had not the pleasure of hearing my person, wit, and beauty painted out with forced praises; but I had a more sensible delight in perceiving the drift of his whole behaviour was to make every hour of my time pass away agreeably.

Clar. The rustic! What, did he never say a handsome thing of your person?

Mrs. Strick. He did, it seems, what pleas'd her better. He flatter'd her good-sense, as much as a less cunning lover would have done her beauty.

Clar. On my conscience you are well match'd.

Jacin. So well, that if my guardian denies me happiness, (and this evening he is to pass his final sentence) nothing is left but to break my prison, and fly into my lover's arms for safety.

Clar. Hey-day! O my conscience thou art a brave girl. Thou art the very first prude that ever had honesty enough to avow her passion for a man.

Jacin. And thou art the first finish'd coquet who ever had any honesty at all.

Mrs.

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Mrs. Strick. Come, come! you are both too good for either of those characters.

Clar. And, my dear Mrs. Strickland, here is the first young married woman of spirit, who has an ill-natur'd fellow for a husband, and never once thinks of using him as he deserves—Good Heaven! if I had such a husband——

Mrs. Strick. You wou'd be just as unhappy as I am.

Clar. But come now—Confess—Do not you long to be a widow?

Mrs. Strick. Would I were any thing but what I am!

Clar. Then go the nearest way about it. I'd break that stout heart of his in less than a fortnight. I'd make him know——

Mrs. Strick. Pray be silent. You know my resolution.

Clar. I know you have no resolution.

Mrs. Strick. You are a mad creature; but I forgive you.

Clar. It is all meant kindly, I assure you. But since you won't be persuaded to your good, I will think of making you easy in your submission as soon as ever I can. I dare say, I may have the same lodging I had last year. I can know immediately—I see my chair: And so ladies both, adieu! [Exit Clarinda.]

Jacin. Come, Mrs. Strickland, we shall but just have time to get home before Mr. Bellamy comes.

Mrs. Strick. Let us return then to our common prison. You must forgive my ill-nature, Jacintha, if I almost with Mr. Strickland may refuse to join your hand where your heart is given.

Jacin. Lord! Madam, what do you mean?

Mrs. Strick. Self-interest only, child! methinks your company in the country would soften all my sorrows, and I could bear them patiently.

Re-enter Clarinda.

Clar. Dear Mrs. Strickland——I am so confus'd, and so out of breath——

Mrs. Strick. Why, what is the matter?

Jacin. I protest you fright me.

Clar. Oh! I have no time to recover myself, I am so frighten'd, and so pleas'd. In short then, the dear man is here.

Mrs. Strick. Here——Lord——Where?

Clar.

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Clar. I met him this instant: I saw him at a distance, turn'd short, and ran hither directly. Let us go home. I tell you, he follows me.

Mrs. Strick. Why, had you not better stay, and let him speak to you?

Clar. Ay!—But then—He won't know where I live, without my telling him.

Mrs. Strick. Come then. Ha! ha! ha!

Jacin. Ay! Poor Clarinda!—*Allons donc.* [Exit, Enter Frankly.]

Frank. Sure that must be she! Her shape and easy air cannot be so exactly copied by another.—Now, you young rogue, Cupid, guide me directly to her, as you would the surest arrow in your quiver. [Exit.]

SCENE changes to the street before Mr. Strickland's Door.

Re-enter Clarinda, Jacintha, and Mrs. Strickland.

Clar. Lord!—dear Jacintha—for heaven's sake make haste. He'll overtake us before we get in.

Jacin. Overtake us! Why, he is not in sight.

Clar. Is not he? Ha! sure I have not dropt my twee—

[I would not have him lose sight of me neither. *Aside.*

Mrs. Strick. Here he is—

Clar. In—In—In then.

Jacin. [Laughing] What, without your twee?

Clar. Psha! I have lost nothing—In—I'll follow you. [Exit into the house, Clarinda last.]

Enter Frankly.

Frank. It is impossible I shou'd be deceiv'd: My eyes, and the quick pulses at the heart assure me it is she. Ha! 'tis she, by Heaven! and the door left open too—A fair invitation, by all the rules of love. [Exit.]

SCENE changes to an apartment in Mr. Strickland's House.

Enter Clarinda, Frankly following her.

Frank. I hope, Madam, you will excuse the boldness of this intrusion, since it is owing to your own behaviour that I am forc'd to it.

Clar. To my behaviour, Sir?

Frank. You cannot but remember me at Bath, Madam, where I so lately had the favour of your hand—

Clar.

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Clar. I do remember, Sir; but I little expected any wrong interpretation of my behaviour from one, who had so much the appearance of a gentleman.

Frank. What I saw of your behaviour was so just, it would admit of no misrepresentation. I only fear'd, whatever reason you had to conceal your name from me at Bath, you might have the same to do it now; and though my happiness was so nearly concern'd, I rather chose to venture thus abruptly after you, than be impertinently inquisitive.

Clā. Sir, there seems to be so much civility in your rudeness, that I can easily forgive it; though I don't see how your happiness is at all concern'd.

Frank. No, Madam! I believe you are the only lady, who could, with the qualifications you are mistress of, be insensible of the power they give you over the happiness of our sex.

Clar. How vain should we women be, if you gentlemen were but wise! If you did not all of you say the same things to every woman, we should certainly be foolish enough to believe some of you were in earnest.

Frank. Could you have the least sense of what I feel whilst I am speaking, you would know me to be in earnest, and what I say to be the dictates of a heart that admires you: may I not say that —

Clar. Sir, this is carrying the —

Frank. When I danced with you at Bath, I was charm'd with your whole behaviour, and felt the same tender admiration: But my hope of seeing you afterwards kept in my passion till a more proper time should offer. You cannot therefore blame me now, if, after having lost you once, I do not suffer an inexcusable modesty to prevent my making use of this second opportunity.

Clar. This behaviour, Sir, is so different from the gaiety of your conversation then, that I am at a loss how to answer you.

Frank. There is nothing, Madam, which could take off from the gaiety with which your presence inspires every heart, but the fear of losing you. How can I be otherwise than as I am, when I know not but you may leave London as abruptly as you did Bath?

Enter

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Enter Lucetta.

Lucet. Madam, the tea is ready, and my mistress waits for you.

Clar. Very well, I come—[*Exit Lucetta.*] You see, Sir, I am call'd away; but I hope you will excuse it, when I leave you with an assurance, that the business which brings me to town will keep me here some time.

Frank. How generous it is in you thus to ease the heart, that knew not how to ask for such a favour—I fear to offend—But this house, I suppose, is yours?

Clar. You will hear of me, if not find me here.

Frank. I then take my leave. [*Exit.*]

Clar. I'm undone!—He has me!

Enter Mrs. Strictland.

Mrs. Strict. Well! how do you find yourself?

Clar. I do find—that if he goes on, as he has begun, I shall certainly have him without giving him the least uneasiness.

Mrs. Strict. A very terrible prospect, indeed!

Clar. But I must tease him a little.——Where is Jacintha? How will she laugh at me, if I become a pupil of her's, and learn to give ease? No, positively, I shall never do it!

Mrs. Strict. Poor Jacintha has met with what I fear'd from Mr. Strictland's temper—an utter denial. I know not why, but he really grows more and more ill-natur'd.

Clar. Well! now do I heartily wish my affairs were in his power a little, that I might have a few difficulties to surmount. —I love difficulties—and yet, I don't know——it is as well as it is.

Mrs. Strict. Ha, ha, ha! Come, the tea waits.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter Mr. Strictland.

Mr. Strict. These doings in my house distract me: I met a fine gentleman—when I inquir'd who he was; why, he came to Clarinda. I met a footman too, and he came to Clarinda. I shall not be easy till she is decamp'd. My wife had the character of a virtuous woman—and they have not been long acquainted. But then they were by themselves at Bath! That hurts—that hurts—they must be watch'd—they must—I

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know them, I know all their wiles, and the best of them are but hypocrites, Ha!—[*Lucetta passes over the stage.*] Suppose I bribe the maid—She is of their council—The manager of their secrets—It shall be so—Money will do it, and I shall know all that passes. Lucetta!

Lucet. Sir.

Mr. Strick. Lucetta!

Re-enter Lucetta.

Lucet. Sir, if he should suspect, and search me now, I'm undone.

Mr. Strick. She is a fly girl, and may be serviceable.

Lucetta, you are a good girl, and have an honest face. I like it. It looks as if it carried no deceit in it—[Yet if she should be false, she can do me most harm.

Lucet. Pray, Sir, speak out.

Mr. Strick. [*Aside.*] No! she is a woman, and it is the highest imprudence to trust her.

Lucet. I am not able to understand you.

Mr. Strick. I am glad of it. I would not have you understand me.

Lucet. Then what did you call me for? [If he should be in love with my face, it would be rare sport.

Mr. Strick. [*Aside.*] Tester, ay, Tester is the proper person—Lucetta, tell Tester I want him.

Lucetta. Yes, Sir—[*Aside.*] Mighty odd, this! it gives me time however to send Buckle with this letter to his master. [*Exit Lucetta.*

Mrs. Strick. Could I but be once well satisfied that my wife had really finish'd me, I believe I should be as quiet as if I were sure of the contrary.—But whilst I am in doubt, I am miserable.

Enter Tester.

Tester. Does your Honour please to want me?

Strick. Ay, Tester.—I need not fear. The honesty of his service, and the goodness of his look make me secure. I will trust him. [*Aside.*]—Tester, I think I have been a tolerable good master to you.

Tester. Yes, Sir,—very tolerable.

Mr. Strick. [*Aside.*] I like his simplicity well. It promises

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promises honesty.—I have a secret, Tester, to impart to you—a thing of the greatest importance. Look upon me, and don't stand picking your fingers.

Tester. Yes, Sir.—No, Sir.

Mr. Strict. But will not his simplicity expose him the more to Lucetta's cunning? Yes, yes! she will worm the secret out of him. I had better trust her with it at once.—So—I will. [*Aside.*] Tester, go, send Lucetta hither.

Tester. Yes, Sir,——— here she is.

Re-enter Lucetta.

Lucetta, my master wants you.

Mr. Strict. Get you down, Tester.

Tester. Yes, Sir.

[*Exit Tester.*]

Lucet. If you want me, Sir, I beg you would make haste, for I have a thousand things to do.

Mr. Strict. Well! well! what I have to say will not take up much time, could I but persuade you to be honest.

Lucet. Why, Sir, I hope you don't suspect my honesty?

Mr. Strict. Well! well! I believe you honest.

[*Shuts the Door.*]

Lucet. What can be at the bottom of all this? [*Aside.*]

Mr. Strict. So! we cannot be too private. Come hither, hussy! nearer yet.

Lucet. Laud! Sir! you are not going to be rude. I vow I will call out.

Mr. Strict. Hold your tongue.—Does the baggage laugh at me? [*Aside.*] She does—she mocks me, and will reveal it to my wife; and her insolence upon it will be more insupportable to me than cuckoldom itself. I have not leisure now, Lucetta—some other time—hush! did not the bell ring? yes, yes: my wife wants you. Go, go, go to her. [*Pushes her out.*] There is no hell on earth like being a slave to suspicion.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE The Piazza, Covent-Garden.

Enter Bellamy and Jack Meggot.

Bella. Nay, nay, I would not put your family into any confusion.

Jack Meg. None in life, my dear, I assure you. I will

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will go and order every thing this instant for her reception.

Bella. You are too obliging, Sir; but you need not be in this hurry, for I am in no certainty when I shall trouble you. I only know that my Jacintha has taken such a resolution.

Jack Meg. Therefore we should be prepar'd; for when once a lady has such a resolution in her head, she is upon the rack till she executes it. Foregad! Mr. Bellamy, this must be a girl of fire.

Enter Frankly.

Frank. Buxom and lively as the bounding Doe: —
Fair as painting can express, or youthful poets fancy when they love. Tol de rol, lol! [Singing and dancing.

Bella. Who is this you talk thus rapturously of?

Frank. Who should it be, but — I shall know her name to-morrow. [Sings and dances.

Jack Meg. What is the matter? ho! is the man mad?

Frank. Even so, gentlemen, as mad as love and joy can make me.

Bella. But inform us whence this joy proceeds.

Frank. Joy! joy! my lads! she's found! my perdita! my charmer!

Jack Meg. Egad! her charms have bewitch'd the man, I think — But who is she?

Bella. Come, come, tell us, who is this wonder?

Frank. But will you say nothing?

Bella. Nothing, as I live.

Frank. Nor you?

Jack Meg. I'll be as silent as the grave —

Frank. With a tombstone upon it, to tell every one whose dust it carries.

Jack Meg. I'll be as secret as a debauch'd prude —

Frank. Whose sanctity every one suspects. Jack, Jack, 'tis not in thy nature. Keeping a secret is worse to thee, than keeping thy accounts. But, to leave fooling, listen to me both, that I may whisper it into your ears, that echo may not catch the finking sound — I cannot tell who she is, 'faith — Tol de rol, lol! —

Jack Meg. Mad! mad! very mad!

Frank. All I know of her is, that she is a charming woman,

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woman, and has given me liberty to visit her again——
Bellamy, 'tis she, the lovely she. [Aside.]

Bella. So I did suppose. [To Frankly.]

Jack Meg. Poor Charles! for Heaven's sake, Mr. Bellamy, persuade him home to his chamber—whilst I prepare every thing for you at home. Adieu.—[Aside to Bellamy.] B'ye, Charles! ha, ha, ha! [Exit.]

Frank. O love! thou art a gift worthy of a God indeed! dear Bellamy, nothing now could add to my pleasure but to see my friend as deep in love as I am.

Bella. I shew my heart is capable of love, by the friendship it bears to you.

Frank. The light of friendship looks but dim before the brighter flame of love. Love is the spring of cheerfulness and joy. Why, how dull and phlegmatic do you shew to me now, whilst I am all life; light as feather'd Mercury!——You dull and cold as earth and water; I light and warm as air and fire.—These are the only elements in Love's world! why, Bellamy, for shame! get thee a mistress, and be sociable.

Bella. Frankly, I am now going to——

Frank. Why that face now? your humble servant, Sir. My flood of joy shall not be stopt by your melancholy fits, I assure you. [Going]

Bella. Stay, Frankly, I beg you stay. What would you say now, if I really were in love?

Frank. Why faith, thou hast such romantic notions of sense and honour, that I know not what to say.

Bella. To confess the truth then, I am in love.

Frank. And do you confess it as if it were a sin? Proclaim it aloud. Glory in it. Boast of it as your greatest virtue. Swear it with a lover's oath, and I will believe you.

Bella. Why then, by the bright eyes of her I love——

Frank. Well said!

Bella. By all that's tender, amiable, and soft in woman——

Frank. Bravo!

Bella. I swear, I am as true an inamorato as ever tagg'd rime.

Frank. And art thou then thoroughly in love? Come to my arms, thou dear companion of my joys!——

[They embrace.]
Enter

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Enter Ranger.

Rang. Why —— Hey! —— is there never a wench to be got for love nor money?

Bella. Pshaw! Ranger here!

Ranger. Yes, Ranger is here, and perhaps does not come so impertinently as you may imagine. Faith! I think I have the knack of finding out secrets. Nay, never look so queer —— Here is a letter, Mr. Bellamy, that seems to promise you better diversion than your hugging one another.

Bella. What do you mean?

Rang. Do you deal much in these paper tokens?

Bella. Oh! the dear kind creature! it is from herself. [To Frankly.]

Rang. What, is it a pair of lac'd shoes she wants? or have the boys broke her windows?

Bella. Hold your prophane tongue!

Frank. Nay, prithee, Bellamy, don't keep it to yourself, as if her whole affections were contain'd in those few lines.

Rang. Prithee let him alone to his silent raptures. But it is, as I always said —— your grave men ever are the greatest whoremasters.

Bella. I cannot be disoblig'd now, say what you will. But how came this into your hands?

Rang. Your servant, Buckle, and I chang'd commissions: he went on my errand, and I came on his.

Bella. 'Sdeath! I want him this very instant.

Rang. He will be here presently: but I demand to know what I have brought you.

Frank. Ay, ay, out with it! you know we never blab, and may be of service.

Bella. Twelve o'clock! oh! the dear hour.

Rang. Why, it is a pretty convenient time, indeed.

Bella. By all that's happy, she promises in this letter here —— to leave her guardian this very night —— and run away with me.

Rang. How is this?

Bella. Nay, I know not how myself —— she says at the bottom —— *Your servant has full instructions from Lucetta how to equip me for my expedition. — I will not trust myself home with you to-night, because I know it is inconvenient;*

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therefore I beg you would procure me a lodging: it is no matter how far off my guardian's.——Your's Jacintha.

Rang. Carry her to a Bagnio, and there you may lodge with her.

Frank. Why, this must be a girl of spirit, faith!

Bella. And beauty equal to her sprightliness. I love her, and she loves me——She has thirty thousand to her fortune.

Rang. The Devil she has!

Bella. And never plays at cards.

Rang. Nor does any one thing like any other woman, I suppose.

Frank. Not so, I hope, neither.

Bella. O Frankly, Ranger, I never felt such ease before! The secret's out, and you don't laugh at me.

Frank. Laugh at thee!——for loving a woman of thirty thousand pounds! thou art a most unaccountable fellow.

Rang. How the Devil could he work her up to this? I never could have had the face to have done it. But——I know not how——There is a degree of assurance in you modest gentlemen, which we impudent fellows never can come up to.

Bella. Oh! your servant, good Sir. You should not abuse me now, Ranger, but do all you can to assist me.

Rang. Why, look ye, Bellamy, I am a damnable unlucky fellow——and so will have nothing to do in this affair. I'll take care to be out of the way, so as to do you no harm. That is all I can answer for: and so——success attend you. [*Going.*] I cannot leave you quite to yourself neither, for if this should prove a Round-house affair, as I make no doubt it will, I believe I may have more interest there than you: and so, Sir, you may hear of me at —— [*Whispers.*]

Bella. For shame, Ranger! the most noted gaming-house in town.

Rang. Forgive me this once, my boy. I must go, faith, to pay a debt of honour to some of the greatest rascals in town. [*Exit.*]

Frank. But where do you design to lodge her?

Bella. At Mr. Meggot's——He is already gone to prepare for her reception.

Frank.

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Frank. The properest place in the world. His aunts will entertain her with honour.

Bella. And the newness of her acquaintance will prevent it's being suspected.——Frankly, give me your hand. This is a very critical time.

Frank. Pho! none of your musty reflections now. When a man is in love to the very brink of matrimony, what the Devil has he to do with Plutarch and Seneca? Here is your servant with a face full of business——I'll leave you together——I shall be at the King's arms, where, if you want my assistance, you may find me. [Exit.

Enter Buckle.

Bella. So——Buckle——you seem to have your hands full.

Buck. Not fuller than my head, Sir, I promise you. You have had your letter, I hope?

Bella. Yes, and in it she refers me to you for my instructions.

Buck. Why, the affair stands thus.——As Mr. Strickland fees the door lock'd and barr'd every night himself, and takes the key up with him, it is impossible for us to escape any way but through the window: for which purpose I have a ladder of ropes.

Bella. Good——

Buck. And, because a hoop, as the ladies wear them now, is not the most decent dress to come down a ladder in—I have, in this other bundle, a suit of boys cloaths, which, I believe, will fit her: at least it will serve the time she will want it.——You will soon be for pulling it off, I suppose.

Bella. Why, you are in spirits, you rogue!

Buck. These I am now to convey to Lucetta——Have you any thing to say, Sir?

Bella. Nothing, but that I will not fail at the hour appointed.—Bring me word to Mr. Meggot's how you go on. Succeed in this, and it shall make your fortune.

[Exeunt.

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ACT III. SCENE *the Street before Mr. Strickland's House.*

Enter Bellamy in a Chairman's Coat.

Bella. **H**OW tediously have the minutes past these last few hours!—and the envious rogues will fly, no lightning quicker, when we would have them stay.——Hold, let me not mistake.——This is the house.——*[Pulls out his watch.]* By Heaven! it is not yet the hour!——I hear somebody coming. The moon's so bright——I had better not be here 'till the happy instant comes. *[Exit.]*

Enter Frankly.

Frank. Wine is no antidote to love, but rather feeds the flame. Now am I such an amorous puppy, that I cannot walk straight home, but must come out of my way to take a view of my queen's palace by moon-light——Ay, here stands the temple where my goddess is adored! the doors open! *[Retires.]*

Enter Lucetta.

Lucet. *[Under the window.]* Madam, Madam, hift! Madam——How shall I make her hear?

Jacintha in boy's cloaths at the window.

Jacin. Who is there? What's the matter?——

Lucet. It is I, madam, you must not pretend to stir 'till I give the word——you'll be discover'd if you do——

Frank. *[Aside.]* What do I see! a man. My heart misgives me!

Lucet. My master is below sitting up for Mrs. Clarinda. He raves as if he were mad about her being out so late.

Frank. *[Aside.]* Here is some intrigue or other. I must see more of this, before I give further way to love.

Lucet. One minute he is in the street—the next he is in the kitchen: now he will lock her out, and then he'll wait himself, and see what figure she makes when she vouchsafes to venture home.

Jacin. I long to have it over. Get me but once out of this house!

Frank. *[Aside.]* Cowardly rascal! would I were in his place. *Lucet.*

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Lucet. If I can but fix him any where, I can let you out myself——you have the ladder ready in case of necessity.

Jacin. Yes, yes! [Exit Lucetta.]

Frank. [Aside.] The ladder! this must lead to some discovery. I shall watch you, my young gentleman, I shall.

Enter Clarinda and Servant.

Clar. This whist is a most enticing Devil. I am afraid I am too late for Mr. Strickland's sober hours.

Jacin. Ha! I hear a noise!

Clar. No! I see a light in Jacintha's window. You may go home. [Giving the servant money.] I am safe.

Jacin. Sure it must be he! Mr. Bellamy.—Sir.

Frank. [Aside.] Does not he call to me?

Clar. [Aside.] Ha! who's that? I am frightened out of my wits.—A man!——

Jacin. Is it you?

Frank. Yes! yes! 'tis I! 'tis I!

Jacin. Listen at the door.

Frank. I will, 'tis open——There is no noise——All's quiet.

Clar. Sure it is my spark—and talking to Jacintha. [Aside.]

Frank. You may come down the ladder—quick.

Jacin. Catch it then and hold it.

Frank. I have it. Now I shall see what sort of mettle my young spark is made of. [Aside.]

Clar. With a ladder too! I'll assure you. But I must see the end of it. [Aside.]

Jacin. Hark! did not somebody speak?

Frank. No! no! be not fearful—'Sdeath! we are discover'd. [Frankly and Clarinda retire.]

Enter Lucetta.

Lucet. Hift, hift! are you ready?

Jacin. Yes, may I venture?

Lucet. Now is your time. He is in high conference with his privy counsellor, Mr. Tester. You may come down the back stairs, and I'll let you out.

[Exit Lucetta.]

Jacin. I will, I will, and am heartily glad of it.

[Exit Jacintha.]

Frank.

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Frank. [*Advancing*] May be so—but you and I shall have a few words before you get off so cleanly.

Clar. [*Advancing*] How lucky it was I came home at this instant! I shall spoil his sport, I believe. Do you know me, Sir?

Frank. I am amaz'd! you here! this was unexpected indeed!

Clar. Why, I believe, I do come a little unexpectedly; but I shall amaze you more—I know the whole course of your amour; all the process of your mighty passion from its first rise——

Frank. What is all this!——

Clar. To the very conclusion, which you vainly hope to effect this night.

Frank. By Heaven, madam, I know not what you mean. I came hither purely to contemplate on your beauties.

Clar. Any beauties, Sir, I find will serve your turn. Did I not hear you talk to her at the window?

Frank. Her!

Clar. Blush, blush, for shame; but be assur'd you have seen the last both of Jacintha and me. [*Exit.*

Frank. Jacintha! Hear me, Madam—she is gone. This must certainly be Bellamy's mistress, and I have fairly ruin'd all his scheme. This it is to be in luck.

Enter Bellamy behind.

Bella. Ha! a man under the window!

Frank. No, here she comes, and I may convey her to him.

Enter Jacintha, and runs to Frankly.

Jacin. I have at last got to you: let's haste away——
Oh!

Frank. Be not frighten'd, lady.

Jacin. Oh! am I abus'd, betray'd!

Bella. Betray'd, Frankly!

Frank. Bellamy!

Bella. I can scarce believe it, though I see it, draw——

Frank. Hear me, Bellamy——lady.

Jacin. Stay——do not fight.

Frank. I am innocent; it is all a mistake.

Jacin. For my sake, be quiet—we shall be discover'd. The family is alarm'd.

Bella. You are obey'd——Mr, Frankly, there is but one way——
Frank.

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Frank. I understand you. Any time but now. You will certainly be discover'd. To-morrow——at your chambers——

Bella. Till then farewell. [*Exeunt Bella. and Jacin.*]

Fran. Then when he is cool, I may be heard; and the real, though suspicious account of this matter may be believ'd. Yet, amidst all this perplexity, it pleases me to find my fair Incognita is jealous of my love.

Mr. Strick. [*Within*] Where's Lucetta? search every place!

Frank. Hark! the cry is up——I must be gone.

[*Exit Frankly.*]

Enter Mr. Strickland, Tester, and Servants.

Mr. Strick. She's gone! she's lost! I am cheated! pursue her! seek her!

Tester. Sir, all her cloaths are in her chamber.

Serv. Sir, Mrs. Clarinda said she was in boy's cloaths.

Mr. Strick. Ay, ay! I know it—Bellamy has her—come along——pursue her. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter Ranger.

Rang. Hark! —— Was not the noise this way — no — there is no game stirring. This same goddess, Diana, shines so bright with her chastity, that, egad! I believe the wenches are asham'd to look her in the face. Now I am in an admirable mood for a frolic! have wine in my head, and money in my pocket, and so am furnish'd out for the cannonading any Countess in Christendom! Ha! what have we here? a ladder! this cannot be placed here for nothing — and a window open — is it love or mischief now that is going on within? —— I care not which — I am in a right cue for either —— up I go, "neck or nothing" —— stay —— do I not stand a greater chance of spoiling sport than I do of making any? that I hate as much as I love the other —— there can be no harm in seeing how the land lies — I'll up [*Goes up softly*] —— all is hush —— ha! a light and a woman, by all that's lucky, neither old nor crooked — I'll in — ha! she is gone again! I will after her, [*Gets in at the window*] and, for fear of the squawls of virtue, and the pursuit of the family, I will make sure of the ladder. Now, Fortune, be my guide. [*Exit with the ladder.*]

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SCENE Mrs. Strictland's Dressing-Room.

Enter Mrs. Strictland followed by Lucetta.

Mrs. Strict. Well! I am in great hopes she will escape.

Lucet. Never fear, Madam. The lovers have the start of him, and I warrant they keep it.

Mrs. Strict. Were Mr. Strictland ever to suspect my being privy to her flight, I know not what might be the consequence.

Lucet. Then you had better be undressing—he may return immediately.

[*As she is sitting down to the toilet Ranger enters behind.*]

Rang. Young and beautiful——— [Aside.

Lucet. I have watch'd him pretty narrowly of late, and never once suspected till this morning——

Mrs. Strict. And who gave you authority to watch his actions, or pry into his secrets?

Lucet. I hope, Madam, you are not angry. I thought it might have been of service to you to know my master was jealous.

Rang. And her husband jealous! If she does but send away the maid, I am happy.

Mrs. Strict. [*Angrily*] Leave me.

Lucet. This it is to meddle with other people's affairs. [Exit in anger.

Rang. What a lucky dog I am! I never made a gentleman a cuckold before. Now, Impudence, assist me.

Mrs. Strict. [*Rising.*] Provoking! I am sure I never have deserv'd it of him.

Rang. Oh! cuckold him by all means, Madam; I am your man! [*She shrieks.*] Oh, fy, Madam! If you squawl so cursedly you will be discover'd.

Mrs. Strict. Discover'd! what mean you, Sir? do you come to abuse me?

Rang. I'll do my endeavour, Madam: you can have no more.

Mrs. Strict. Whence came you? how got you here?

Rang. Dear Madam, so long as I am here, what signifies how I got here, or whence I came? but that I may satisfy your curiosity: First, as to your whence came you? I answer, out of the street: and, to your how got you here? I say, in at the window. It stood so

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so invitingly open, it was irresistible. But, Madam—you was going to undress; I beg I may not incommode you.

Mrs. Strick. This is the most consummate piece of impudence!——

Rang. For Heaven's sake have one drop of pity for a poor young fellow, who long has lov'd you.

Mrs. Strick. What would the fellow have?

Rang. Your husband's usage will excuse you to the world.

Mrs. Strick. I cannot bear this insolence! help! help!

Rang. Oh! hold that clamorous tongue, Madam! speak one word more and I am gone, positively gone.

Mrs. Strick. Gone! so I would have you.

Rang. Lord, Madam! you are so hasty.

Mrs. Strick. Shall I not speak, when a thief, a robber, breaks into my house at midnight? Help! help!

Rang. Ha! no one hears. Now, Cupid, assist me! Look ye, Madam, I never could make fine speeches, and cringe, and bow, and fawn, and flatter, and lie; I have said more to you already than I ever said to a woman, in such circumstances, in all my life. But, since I find you will yield to no persuasion to your good—I will gently force you to be grateful. [*Throws down his hat, and seizes her.*] Come, come! unbend that brow, and look more kindly on me!

Mrs. Strick. For shame, Sir—Thus on my knees let me beg for mercy. [*Kneeling.*]

Rang. And thus, on mine, let me beg the same.

[*He kneels, catches, and kisses her.*]

Mr. Strick. [*Within*] Take away her sword! she'll hurt herself!

Mrs. Strick. O Heavens! that is my husband's voice!

Rang. [*Rising.*] The Devil it is!

Mr. Strick. [*Within.*] Take away her sword, I say; and then I can close with her.

Mrs. Strick. He is upon the stairs, now coming up. I am undone if he sees you.

Rang. Pox on him, I must decamp then. Which way?

Mrs. Strick. Thro' this passage into the next chamber.

Rang.

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Rang. And so into the street. With all my heart. You may be perfectly easy, Madam. Mum's the word, I never blab.—[*Aside.*] I shall not leave off so, but wait till the last moment. [Exit *Ranger*.]

Mrs. Strick. So, he is gone? what could I have said if he had been discover'd!

Enter *Mr. Strickland*, driving in *Jacintha*, *Lucetta* following.

Mr. Strick. Once more, my pretty masculine Madam, you are welcome home. And I hope to keep you somewhat closer than I have done; for to-morrow morning eight o'clock is the latest hour you shall stay in this lewd town.

Jacin. O, Sir! when once a girl is equip'd with a hearty resolution, it is not your worship's sagacity, nor the great chain at your gate, can hinder her from doing what she has a mind.

Mr. Strick. O Lord! Lord! how this love improves a young lady's modesty!

Jacin. Am I to blame to seek for happiness any where, when you are resolved to make me miserable here?

Mr. Strick. I have this night prevented your making yourself so; and will endeavour to do it for the future. I have you safe now, and the Devil shall not get you out of my clutches again. I have lock'd the doors and barr'd them, I warrant you. So here—[*Giving her a candle.*] Troop to your chamber and to bed, whilst you are well. Go—[*He treads on Ranger's Hat.*] What's here? a hat! a man's hat in my wife's dressing-room!

[*Looking at the hat.*]

Mrs. Strick. [*Aside.*] What shall I do?

Mr. Strick. [*Taking up the hat, and looking at Mrs. Strickland.*] Ha! by Hell! I see 'tis true.

Mrs. Strick. My fears confound me. I dare not tell the truth, and know not how to frame a lye! [*Aside.*]

Mr. Strick. Mrs. Strickland! Mrs. Strickland! How came this hat into your chamber?

Lucet. [*Aside.*] Are you that way dispos'd, my fine lady, and will not trust me?

Mr. Strick. Speak, wretch, speak.—

Jacin. I could not have suspected this.

[*Aside.*]

Mr. Strick. Why dost thou not speak?

Mrs.

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Mrs. Strick. Sir——
Mr. Strick. Guilt——'tis guilt that ties your tongue!

Lucet. I must bring her off, however.—No chambermaid can help it—— *[Aside.*

Mr. Strick. My fears are just, and I am miserable?—Thou worst of women!

Mrs. Strick. I know my innocence, and can bear this no longer.

Mrs. Strick. I know you are false—and 'tis I who will bear my injuries no longer. *[Both walk about in a passion.*

Lucet. *[To Jacintha aside.]* Is not the hat yours? Own it, Madam. *[Takes away Jacintha's hat, and exit.*

Mrs. Strick. What ground? what cause have you for jealousy, when you yourself can witness your leaving me was accidental, your return uncertain; and expected even sooner than it happen'd? The abuse is gross and palpable.

Mr. Strick. Why, this is true!

Mrs. Strick. Indeed, Jacintha! I am innocent.

Mr. Strick. And yet this hat must belong to somebody.

Jacin. Dear Mrs. Strickland, be not concern'd—When he has diverted himself a little longer with it—

Mr. Strick. Ha!

Jacin. I suppose he will give me my hat again?

Mr. Strick. Your hat?

Jacin. Yes, my hat. You brush'd it from my side yourself, and then trod upon it; whether on purpose to abuse this lady or no, you best know yourself.

Mr. Strick. It cannot be—'tis all a lie.

Jacin. Believe so still—with all my heart—But the hat is mine. “Now, Sir, who does it belong to?”

[Snatches it, puts it on.

Mr. Strick. Why did she look so?

Jacin. Your violence of temper is too much for her. You use her ill, and then suspect her for that confusion which you yourself occasion.

Mr. Strick. Why did not you set me right at first?

Jacin. Your hard usage of me, Sir, is a sufficient reason why I should not be much concern'd to undeceive you at all. 'Tis for your lady's sake I do it now; who deserves much better of you than to be thus expos'd

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for every slight suspicion. See where she fits—Go to her,

Mrs. Strick. [*rising.*] Indeed, Mr. Strickland, I have a soul as much above—

Mr. Strick. Whew! now you have both found your tongues, and I must bear their eternal rattle!

Jacin. For shame! Sir, Go to her, and—

Mr. Strick. Well, well, what shall I say? I forgive—
—all is over. I, I, I forgive!

Mrs. Strick. Forgive! What do you mean?

Jacin. Forgive her! is that all? Consider, Sir—

Mr. Strick. Hold—hold your confounded tongues, and I'll do any thing. I'll ask pardon—or forgive—or any thing. Good now, be quiet—I ask your pardon—there—[*Kisses her.*] For you, Madam—I am infinitely oblig'd to you, and I cou'd almost find in my heart to make you a return in kind, by marrying you to a beggar—but I have more conscience. Come, come, to your chamber—Here, take this candle—

Enter Lucetta pertly.

Lucet. Sir, if you please, I will light my young lady to bed.

Mr. Strick. No, no! no such thing, good Madam. She shall have nothing but her pillow to consult this night, I assure you—So, in, in. [*The ladies take leave.*] [*Exit Jacintha.*] Good night, kind Madam.

Lucet. Pox of the jealous fool! We might both have escap'd out of the window purely. [*Afide.*]

Mr. Strick. Go, get you down; and, do you hear? order the coach to be ready in the morning at eight exactly. [*Exit Lucetta.*] So, she is safe till to-morrow, and then for the country; and when she is there, I can manage as I think fit.

Mrs. Strick. Dear Mr. Strickland—

Mr. Strick. I am not in a humour, Mrs. Strickland, fit to talk with you—Go to bed—I will endeavour to get the better of my temper, if I can—I'll follow you. [*Exit Mrs. Strickland.*] How despicable have I made myself!

[*Exit.*]

S C E N E *Another chamber.*

Enter Ranger.

Rang. All seems hush'd again, and I may venture out. I may as well sneak off whilst I am in a whole skin.

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skin. And shall so much love and claret as I am in possession of, only lull me to sleep, when it might so much better keep me waking? Forbid it, Fortune! and forbid it, Love! This is a chamber, perhaps of some bewitching female, and I may yet be happy. Ha! a light! the door opens. A boy! pox on him.

[He retires.
Enter Jacintha, with a candle.

Jacin. I have been listening at the door; and from their silence, I conclude they are peaceably gone to bed together.

Rang. A pretty boy, faith! He seems uneasy. [Aside.

Jacin. [Sitting down.] What an unlucky night has this proved to me? Every circumstance has fallen out unhappily.

Rang. He talks aloud. I'll listen. [Aside.

Jacin. But what most amazes me is, that Clarinda should betray me!

Rang. Clarinda! she must be a woman! well, what of her? [Aside.

Jacin. My guardian else would never have suspected my disguise.

Rang. [Aside.] Disguise! Ha, it must be so. What eyes she has! What a dull rogue was I not to suspect this sooner?

Jacin. Ha, I had forgot—the ladder is at the window still, and I will boldly venture by myself. [rising briskly, sees Ranger.] Ha! a man, and well drest! Ha, Mrs. Strickland, are you then at last dishonest?

Rang. [Aside.] By all my wishes she is a charming woman! lucky rascal!

Jacin. But I will, if possible, conceal her shame, and stand the brunt of his impertinence.

Rang. What shall I say to her? No matter! any thing soft will do the business. [Aside.

Jacin. Who are you?

Rang. A man, young gentleman.

Jacin. And what would you have?

Rang. A woman.

Jacin. You are very free, Sir. Here are none for you.

Rang. Ay, but there is one, and a fair one too; the most charming creature Nature ever set her hand to; and

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and you are the dear little pilot that must direct me to her heart.

Jacin. What mean you, Sir? It is an office I am not accustomed to.

Rang. You won't have far to go, however. I never make my errands tedious. It is to your own heart, dear Madam, I would have you whisper in my behalf. Nay, never start. Think you such beauty could ever be conceal'd from eyes so well acquainted with it's charms?

Jacin. What will become of me! If I cry out, Mrs. Strickland is undone. This is my last resort. [*Aside.*]

Rang. Pardon, dear lady, the boldness of this visit, which your guardian's care has forc'd me to—But I long have lov'd you, long doted on that beauteous face, and follow'd you from place to place, though, perhaps, unknown and unregarded.

Jacin. Here's a special fellow. [*Aside.*]

Rang. Turn then an eye of pity on my sufferings; and by Heaven—one tender look from those piercing eyes, one touch of this soft hand—[*Going to take her hand.*]

Jacin. Hold, Sir—no nearer.

Rang. Would more than repay whole years of pain.

Jacin. Hear me; but keep your distance, or I'll raise the family—

Rang. Blessings on her tongue, only for prattling to me. [*Aside.*]

Jacin. Oh, for a moment's courage, and I shall shame him from his purpose. [*Aside.*] If I were certain so much gallantry had been shown on my account only—

Rang. You wrong your beauty to think that any other could have power to draw me hither. By all the little Loves that play about your lips, I swear—

Jacin. You came to me, and me alone?

Rang. By all the thousand graces that inhabit there, you, and only you, have drawn me hither.

Jacin. Well said.

Rang. By Heaven she comes! ah, honest Ranger, I never knew thee fail!—[*Aside.*]

Jacin. Pray, Sir, where did you leave this hat?

Rang. That hat!—That hat!—'tis my hat—I dropt it in the next chamber as I was looking for yours.

Jacin.

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Jacin. How mean and despicable do you look now!

Rang. So, so! I am in a pretty pickle! [Aside.]

Jacin. You know by this, that I am acquainted with every thing that has passed within, and how ill it agrees with what you have professed to me—Let me advise you, Sir, to be gone immediately. Through that window you may easily get into the street—One scream of mine, the least noise at that door, will wake the house.

Rang. Say you so? [Aside.]

Jacin. Believe me, Sir, an injur'd husband is not so easily appeas'd, and a suspected wife that is jealous of her honour—

Rang. Is the Devil, and so let's have no more of her. Look ye, Madam, [Getting between the door and her.] I have but one argument left, and that is a strong one: Look on me well, I am as handsome, a strong, well made fellow, as any about town, and since we are alone, as I take it, we can have no occasion to be more private.

[Going to lay hold of her.]

Jacin. I have a reputation, Sir, and will maintain it.

Rang. You have a bewitching pair of eyes.

Jacin. Consider my virtue. [Struggling.]

Rang. Consider your beauty and my desires.

Jacin. If I were a man, you dar'd not use me thus.

Rang. I should not have the same temptation.

Jacin. Hear me, Sir, I will be heard. [Breaks from him.] There is a man who will make you repent this usage of me—O Bellamy! where art thou now?

Rang. Bellamy!

Jacin. Were he here, you durst not thus affront me.

[Bursting out a crying.]

Rang. His mistress, on my soul! [Aside.] You can love, Madam; you can love, I find. Her tears affect me strangely. [Aside.]

Jacin. I am not ashamed to own my passion for a man of virtue and honour.—I love and glory in it.

Rang. Oh, brave! and you can write letters, you can. I will not trust myself home with you this evening, because I know it is inconvenient.

Jacin. Ha!

Rang. Therefore I beg you would procure me a lodging; 'tis no matter how far off my guardian's. Your's, Jacintha.

Jacin.

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Jacin. The very words of my letter: I am amaz'd. Do you know Mr. Bellamy?

Rang. There is not a man on earth I have so great a value for; and he must have some value for me too, or he would never have shewn me your pretty epistle. Think of that, fair lady. The ladder is at the window: And so, Madam, I hope delivering you safe into his arms will, in some measure, expiate the crime I have been guilty of to you.

Jacin. Good Heaven, how fortunate is this!

Rang. I believe I make myself appear more wicked than I really am. For, damn me, if I do not feel more satisfaction in the thoughts of restoring you to my friend, than I could have pleasure in any favour your bounty could have bestow'd. "*Let any other rakes lay his hand upon his heart, and say the same.*"

Jacin. Your generosity transports me.

Rang. Let us lose no time then, the ladder's ready. Where was you to lodge?

Jacin. At Mr. Meggot's.

Rang. At my friend Jackey's? better and better still.

Jacin. Are you acquainted with him too?

Rang. Ay, ay! Why, did I not tell you at first that I was one of your old acquaintance? I know all about you, you see; though the Devil fetch me if ever I saw you before. Now, Madam——

Jacin. And now, Sir——Have with you.

Rang. Then thou art a girl of spirit. And though I long to hug you for trusting yourself with me, I will not beg a single kiss, till Bellamy himself shall give me leave. He must fight well that takes you from me.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV. SCENE the Piazza.

Enter Bellamy and Frankly.

Bella. **P**SHA! What impertinent devil put it into your head to meddle with my affairs?

Frank. You know I went thither in pursuit of another.

Bella. I know nothing you had to do there at all.
Frank.

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Frank. I thought, Mr. Bellamy, you were a lover.

Bella. I am so; and therefore should be forgiven this sudden warmth.

Frank. And therefore should forgive the fond impertinence of a lover.

Bella. Jealousy, you know, is as natural an incident to love —

Frank. As curiosity. By one piece of silly curiosity I have gone nigh to ruin both myself and you. Let not then your jealousy complete our misfortunes. I fear I have lost a mistress as well as you. Then let us not quarrel. All may come right again.

Bella. It is impossible. She is gone, remov'd for ever from my sight. She is in the country by this time.

Frank. How did you lose her after we parted?

Bella. By too great confidence. When I got her to my chair, the chairman were not to be found—And safe as I thought in our disguise, I actually put her into the chair, when Mr. Strictland and his servants were in sight; which I had no sooner done, than they surrounded us, overpower'd me, and carry'd her away.

Frank. Unfortunate indeed! Could you not make a second attempt?

Bella. I had design'd it. But when I came to the door I found the ladder remov'd; and hearing no noise, seeing no lights, nor being able to make any body answer, I concluded all attempts as impracticable, as I now find them. Ha! I see Lucetta coming. Then they may be still in town. [*Enter Lucetta.*] Lucetta, welcome! What news of Jacintha?

Lucet. News, Sir! you fright me out of my senses! why, is she not with you?

Bella. What do you mean? with me? I have not seen her since I lost her last night.

Lucet. Good Heav'n! then she is undone for ever.

Frank. Why, what's the matter?

Bella. Speak out—I'm all amazement.

Lucet. She is escap'd without any of us knowing how. Nobody miss her till morning. We all thought she went away with you; but Heaven knows now what may have happen'd.

Bella.

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Bella. Somebody must have accompanied her in her flight.

Lucet. We know of nobody. We are all in confusion at home. My master swears revenge on you. My mistress says a stranger has her.

Bella. A stranger?

Lucet. But Mrs. Clarinda—

Bella. Clarinda! Who is she?

Lucet. [*To Frankly.*] The lady, Sir, you saw at our house last night.

Frank. Ha! what of her?

Lucet. She says, she is sure one Frankly is the man. She saw them together, and knows it to be true.

Frank. Damn'd Fortune! [*Aside.*]

Lucet. Sure this is not Mr. Frankly.

Frank. Nothing will convince him now. [*Aside.*]

Bell. [*Looking at Frankly.*] Ha! 'tis truth—I see it is true. [*Aside.*] Lucetta, run up to Buckle, and take him with you to search wherever you can. [*Puts her out.*] Now, Mr. Frankly, I have found you.—You have used me so ill, that you force me to forget you are my friend.

Frank. What do you mean?

Bella. Draw.

Frank. Are you mad? By heavens, I am innocent.

Bella. I have heard you, and will no longer be impos'd on—Defend yourself.

Frank. Nay, if you are so hot, I draw to defend myself, as I would against a madman.

Enter Ranger.

Rang. What the devil, swords at noon-day? Have among you, faith! [*Parts them.*] What's here, Bella—my?—Yes, gad, you are Bellamy, and you are Frankly. Put up, put up, both of you—or else—I am a devilish fellow when once my sword is out.

Bella. We shall have a time—

Rang. [*Pushing Bellamy one way.*] A time for what?

Frank. I shall be always as ready to defend my innocence as now.

Rang. [*Pushing Frankly t'other way.*] Innocence! ay, to be sure—at your age—A mighty innocent fellow, no doubt. But what in the name of Commonsense is it that ails you both? Are you mad? The last time

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time I saw you, you were hugging and kissing; and now you are cutting one another's throats—I never knew any good come of one fellow's beslaving another—But I shall put you into better humour, I warrant you—Bellamy, Frankly, listen both of you—Such fortune—Such a scheme—

Bella. Pr'ythee, leave fooling. What, art drunk?

Frank. He is always so, I think.

Rang. And who gave you the privilege of thinking? Drunk? No! I am not drunk—Tipsey, perhaps, with my good fortune—merry and in spirits—though I have not fire enough to run my friend through the body. Not drunk, though Jack Meggot and I have box'd it about—Champagne was the word for two whole hours by Shrewsbury clock.

Bella. Jack Meggot!—Why, I left him at one going to bed.

Rang. That may be, but I made a shift to rouse him and his family, by four this morning. Ounds! I pick'd up a wench and carried her to his house.

Bell. Ha!

Rang. Such a variety of adventures—Nay, you shall hear—But before I begin, Bellamy, you shall promise me half a dozen kisses before-hand; for the devil fetch me if that little Jacintha would give me one, though I pressed hard.

Bella. Who, Jacintha? Press to kiss Jacintha?

Rang. Kiss her! ay! why not? Is she not a woman, and made to be kiss'd?

Bella. Kiss her—I shall run distracted!

Rang. How could I help it, when I had her alone, you rogue, in her bed-chamber at midnight! If I had been to be sacrificed, I should have done it.

Bella. Bed-chamber, at midnight! I can hold no longer—Draw.

Frank. Be easy, Bellamy.

[Interposing.]

Bella. He has been at some of his damn'd tricks with her.

Frank. Hear him out.

Rang. 'Sdeath, how could I know she was his mistress? But I tell this story most miserably. I should have told you first, I was in another lady's chamber. By the Lord, I got in at the window by a ladder of ropes.

Frank.

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Frank. Ha! another lady?

Rang. Another: and stole in upon her, whilst she was undressing; beautiful as an angel blooming and young——

Frank. What, in the same house?

Bella. What is this to Jacintha? Ease me of my pain.

Rang. Ay, ay, in the same house, on the same floor. The sweetest, little angel—But I design to have another touch with her.

Frank. 'Death! but you shall have a touch upon me first.

Bella. Stay, Frankly. [Interposing.]

Rang. Why, what strange madness has possess'd you both, that nobody must kiss a pretty wench but yourselves?

Bella. What became of Jacintha?

Rang. Ounds! what have you done that you must monopolize kissing?

Frank. Prithee, honest Ranger, ease me of the pain I am in. Was her name Clarinda?

Bella. Speak in plain words, where Jacintha is, where to be found——Dear boy, tell me.

Rang. Ay, now it is, honest Ranger, and dear boy, tell me—and a minute ago, my throat was to be cut—I could find in my heart not to open my lips. But here comes Jack Meggot, who will let you into all the secret, though he design'd to keep it from you, in half the time that I can, though I had ever so great a mind to tell it you.

Enter Jack Meggot.

Jack Meg. So, save ye, save ye lads! We have been frighten'd out of our wits for you: not hearing of Mr. Bellamy, poor Jacintha is ready to sink for fear of any accident.

Bella. Is she at your house?

Jack Meg. Why, did not you know that? We dispatch'd Master Ranger to you three hours ago.

Rang. Ay, plague! but I had business of my own, so I could not come——Hark ye, Frankly, is your girl maid, wife, or widow?

Frank. A maid, I hope.

Rang. The odds are against you, Charles——But mine is married, you rogue, and her husband jealous
——The

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—The devil is in it, if I do not reap some reward for my last night's service.

Bella. He has certainly been at Mrs. Strickland herself: But, Frankly, I dare not look on you.

Frank. This one embrace cancels all thoughts of enmity.

Bella. Thou generous man!—But I must haste to ease *Jacinta* of her fears. [Exit.]

Frank. And I to make up matters with Clarinda. [Exit.]

Rang. And I to some kind wench, or other, Jack. But where I shall find her, Heaven knows. And so, my service to your monkey.

Jack Meg. Adieu, Rattlepate. [Exeunt.]

SCENE the ball of Mr. Strickland's house.

Enter Mrs. Strickland and Clarinda.

Mrs. Strick. But, why in such a hurry, my dear? Stay till your servants can go along with you.

Clar. Oh, no matter! They'll follow with my things. It is but a little way off, and my chair will guard me. After my staying out so late last night, I am sure Mr. Strickland will think every minute an age whilst I am in his house.

Mrs. Strick. I am as much amaz'd at his suspecting your innocence as my own; and every time I think of it, I blush at my present behaviour to you.

Clar. No ceremony, dear child!

Mrs. Strick. No, Clarinda, I am too well acquainted with your good humour. But I fear in the eye of a malicious world, it may look like a confirmation of his suspicion.

Clar. My dear, if the world will speak ill of me, for the little innocent gaiety, which I think the peculiar happiness of my temper, I know no way to prevent it, and am only sorry the world is so ill-natur'd; but I shall not part with my mirth, I assure them; so long as I know it innocent. I wish, my dear, this may be the greatest uneasiness your husband's jealousy ever gives you.

Mrs. Strick. I hope he never again may have such occasion, as he had last night.

Clar. You are so unfashionable a wife!——Why, last night's accident would have made half the wives in

C

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London easy for life. Has not his jealousy discover'd itself openly? And are not you innocent? There is nothing but your foolish temper that prevents his being absolutely in your power.

Mrs. Striſt. Clarinda, this is too serious an affair to laugh at. Let me advise you, take care of Mr. Frankly: observe his temper well; and if he has the least taint of jealousy, cast him off, and never trust to keeping him in your power.

Clar. You will hear little more of Frankly, I believe. Here is Mr. Striſtland.

Enter Mr. Striſtland and Lucetta.

Mr. Striſt. Lucetta says you want me, Madam.

Clar. I trouble you, Sir, only that I might return you thanks for the civilities I have receiv'd in your family, before I took my leave.

Mr. Striſt. Keep them to yourself, dear Madam. As it is at my request that you leave my house, your thanks upon that occasion are not very desirable.

Clar. O Sir, you need not fear. My thanks were only for your civilities. They will not over-burden you. But I'll conform to your humour, Sir, and part with as little ceremony—

Mr. Striſt. As we met.

Clar. The brute! [*Aſide.*] My dear, good b'ye, we may meet again. [*To Mrs. Striſtland.*]

Mr. Striſt. If you dare trust me with your hand.

Clar. Lucetta, remember my instruction. Now, Sir, have with you. [*Mr. Striſtland leads Clarinda out.*]

Mrs. Striſt. Are her instructions cruel or kind, Lucetta? for I suppose they relate to Mr. Frankly.

Lucet. Have you a mind to try if I can keep a secret as well as yourself, Madam? But I will shew you I am fit to be trusted by keeping this, though it signifies nothing.

Mrs. Striſt. This answer is not so civil, I think.

Lucet. I beg pardon, Madam: I meant it not to offend.

Mrs. Striſt. Pray let us have no more such. I neither desire, nor want your assistance.

Re-enter Mr. Striſtland.

Mr. Striſt. She is gone: I feel myself somewhat easier already. Since I have begun the day with gallantry, Madam, shall I conduct you up?

Mrs.

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Mrs. Striſt. There is ſomething, Sir, which gives you ſecret uneaſineſs. I wiſh——

Mr. Striſt. Perhaps ſo, Madam, and perhaps it may ſoon be no ſecret at all. [*Leads her out.*]

Lucet. Would I were once ſettled with my young lady; for at preſent this is but an odd ſort of a queer family. Laſt night's affair puzzles me. A hat there was, that belong'd to none of us, that's certain. Madam was in a fright, that is as certain; and I brought all off. Jacintha eſcap'd, no one of us knows how. The good man's jealousy was yeſterday groundleſs; yet to-day, in my mind, he is very much in the right. Mighty odd, all this! Somebody knocks. If this ſhould be Clarinda's Spark, I have an odd meſſage for him too.

[*She opens the door.*]

Enter Frankly.

Frank. So, my pretty handmaid! meeting with you gives me ſome hopes. May I ſpeak with Clarinda?

Lucet. Who do you want, Sir?

Frank. Clarinda, child; the young lady I was admitted to yeſterday.

Lucet. Clarinda!——No ſuch perſon lives here, I aſſure you.

Frank. Where then?

Lucet. I don't know indeed, Sir.

Frank. Will you enquire within?

Lucet. Nobody knows in this houſe, Sir, you will find.

Frank. What do you mean? She is a friend of Jacintha's, your lady. I will take my oath ſhe was here laſt night; and you yourſelf ſpoke of her being here this morning——Not know!

Lucet. No: none of us know. She went away of a ſudden——no one of us can imagine whither.

Frank. Why faith, child, thou haſt a tolerable face, and haſt delivered this denial very handsomely. But let me tell you, your impertinence this morning had lik'd to have coſt me my life. Now, therefore, make me amends. I come from your young miſtreſs. I come from Mr. Bellamy. I come with my purſe full of gold (that perſuaſive rhetoric) to win you to let me ſee and ſpeak to this Clarinda once again.

Lucet. She is not here, Sir.

Frank. Direct me to her.

Lucet. No, I can't do that neither.

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Enter Mr. Strictland behind.

Mr. Strict. I heard a knocking at the door, and a man's voice—Ha——— *[Aside.*

Frank. Deliver this letter to her.

Mr. Strict. By all my fears, a letter! *[Aside.*

Lucet. I don't know but I may be tempted to do that.

Frank. Take it then——and with it this.

[Kisses her, and gives her money.

Mr. Strict. Um! there are two bribes in a breath! What a jade she is! *[Aside.*

Lucet. Ay—this gentleman understands reason.

Frank. And be assur'd you oblige your mistress while you are serving me.

Mr. Strict. Her mistress!—Damn'd sex! and damn'd wife, thou art an epitome of that sex! *[Aside.*

Frank. And if you can procure me an answer, your fee shall be enlarg'd. *[Exit Frank.*

Lucet. The next step is to get her to read this letter.

Mr. Strict. *[Snatches the letter.]* No noise——but stand silent there, whilst I read this.

[Breaks it open, and drops the case.

Madam, The gaiety of a heart happy as mine was yesterday, may, I hope, easily excuse the unseasonable visit I made your house last night.—Death and the devil! confusion! I shall run distracted. It is too much! There was a man then to whom the hat belong'd; and I was gull'd, abused, cheated, impos'd on by a chit, a girl—O woman! woman! But I will be calm, search it coolly to the bottom, and have a full revenge——

Lucet. *[Aside.]* So here's fine work! He'll make himself very ridiculous though.

Mr. Strict. *[Reads on.]* I know my innocence will appear so manifestly, that I need only appeal to the lady who accompanied you at Bath.—Your very humble servant, good, innocent, fine Madam Clarinda!—And I do not doubt but her good-nature—(bawd! bawd!)—will not let you persist in injuring your obedient humble servant,

Charles Frankly.

Now who can say my jealousy lack'd foundation, or my suspicion of fine Madam's innocent gaiety was unjust?—Gaiety! why ay! 'twas gaiety brought him hither. Gaiety makes her a bawd—my wife may be a whore in gaiety. What a number of sins become fashionable under the notion of gaiety!—What! you receiv'd this epistle

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epistle in gaiety too? and were to deliver it to my wife, I suppose, when the gay fit came next upon her?—Why! you impudent young strumpet, do you laugh at me?

Lucet. I wou'd, if I dar'd, and heartily.—Be pleas'd, Sir, only to look at that piece of paper that lies there.

Mr. Stri&. Ha!

Lucet. I have not touched it, Sir. It is the case that letter came in, and the directions will inform you whom I was to deliver it to.

Mr. Stri&. This is directed to Clarinda!

Lucet. Oh! is it so? Now read it over again, and all your foolish doubts will vanish.

Mr. Stri&. I have no doubts at all. I am satisfied that you, Jacintha, Clarinda, my wife, all are——

Lucet. Lud! Lud! you would make a body mad.

Mr. Stri&. Hold your impertinent tongue.

Lucet. You'll find the thing to be just as I say, Sir.

Mr. Stri&. Be gone. [*Exit Lucetta.*] They must be poor at the work, indeed, if they did not lend one another their names. 'Tis plain, 'tis evident. And I am miserable. But for my wife she shall not stay one night longer in my house. Separation, shame, contempt shall be her portion. I am determin'd in the thing; and when once it is over, I may perhaps be easy. [*Exit.*]

S C E N E *the Street.*

Clarinda brought in a chair, Ranger following.

Rang. Hark ye, chairman! Damn your confounded trot. Go slower.

Clar. Here, stop.

Rang. By Heavens! the monsters hear reason, and obey.

Clar. [*Letting down the windows.*] What troublesome fellow was that?

1 Chairm. Some rake, I warrant, that cannot carry himself home, and wants us to do it for him.

Clar. There——And pray do you take care I be not troubled with him. [*Goes in.*]

Rang. That's as much as to say now, Pray follow me. Madam, you are a charming woman, and I will do it——

1 Chairm. Stand off, Sir.

Rang. Prithee, honest fellow—what—what writing is that? [*Endeavouring to get in.*]

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2 Chairm. You come not here !

Rang. Lodgings to be let ! a pretty convenient inscription, and the sign of a good modest family ! There may be lodgings for gentlemen as well as ladies. Hark ye, Rogues ! I'll lay you all the silver I have in my pocket, there it is, I get in there in spite of your teeth, ye pimps ! *[Throws down money, and goes in.]*

1 Chairm. What have you let the gentleman in ?

2 Chairm. I'll tell you what, partner, he certainly slipt by whilst we were picking up the money. Come, take up.

“ *[Within] A chair ! chair ! chair !* ” *[Exeunt.]*

S C E N E Clarinda's Lodgings.

“ *A noise within between Ranger and Landlady.* ”

Clarinda enters ‘ laughing, ’ a Maid following.

“ Maid. Bless me, Madam, you seem disorder'd : what's the matter ? ”

“ Clar. Some impertinent fellow follow'd the chair, and I am afraid they let him in. ”

“ *[A noise between Ranger and the Landlady ;*

“ *[Ranger talks loud.]* ”

Clar. My madcap cousin Ranger, as I live, I am sure he does not know me.—If I cou'd but hide my face now, what sport I should have ! A mask, a mask ! run and see if you can find a mask !

Maid. I believe there is one above.

Clar. Run, run, and fetch it, *[Exit Maid.]*

Here he comes ! *[Enter Ranger and Landlady.]*

How unlucky this is ! *[Turning from 'em.]*

Landl. What's your business here, unmannerly Sir ?

Rang. Well, let's see these lodgings that are to be let.—Gad, a very pretty neat tenement !—But hark ye, is it real and natural, all that, or only patch'd up and new-painted this summer season, against the town fills ?

Landl. What does the saucy fellow mean with his double tendres here ? Get you down.—

Enter Maid with a mask.

Maid. Here is a very dirty one. *[Aside to Clarinda.]*

Clar. No matter—now we shall see a little what he wou'd be at. *[Aside.]*

Landl. This is an honest house—For all your lac'd waistcoat, I'll have you thrown down neck and heels.

Rang. Phoh ! not in such a hurry, good old Lady—A mask

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mask — Nay, with all my heart; it saves a world of blushing — Have you ne'er a one for me? — I am apt to be ashamed myself on these occasions.

Landl. Get you down, I say —

Rang. Not if I guess right, old Lady. Madam, [*to Clarinda, who makes signs to the Landlady to retire*] look ye there now! that a woman shou'd live to your age, and know so little of the matter. Be gone. [*Exit Landlady.*] By her forwardness this should be a whore of quality. My boy Ranger, thou art in luck to-day. — She won't speak, I find — then I will. [*Aside.*] Delicate lodgings truly, Madam; and very neatly furnish'd — A very convenient room this, I must needs own, to entertain a mix'd company. But, my dear charming creature, does not that door open to a more commodious apartment for the happiness of a private friend, or so? The prettiest brass lock! — Fast, um; that won't do. 'Sdeath, you are a beautiful woman; I am sure you are! Prythee, let me see your face: it is your interest, child. — The longer you delay, the more I shall expect. Therefore, [*taking her hand*] my dear, soft, kind, new acquaintance, thus let me take your hand; and, whilst you gently with the other let day-light in upon me, let me softly hold you to me, that with my longing lips I may receive the warmest, best impression. [*She unmasks.*] Clarinda!

Clar. Ha, ha! Your servant, cousin Ranger — Ha, ha, ha!

Rang. Oh, your humble servant, Madam! you had liked to have been beholden to your mask, cousin! I must brazen it out. [*Aside.*

Clar. Ha, ha, ha! You were not so happy in your disguise, Sir. The pretty stagger in your gait, that happy disposition of your wig, the genteel negligence of your whole person, and those pretty flowers of modish gallantry, made it impossible to mistake you, my sweet cuz. Ha, ha!

Rang. Oh, I knew you too! but I fancied you had taken a particular liking to my person, and had a mind to sink the relation under that little piece of black velvet! And, egad, you never find me behind hand in a frolic. But since it is otherwise, my merry, good-humour'd cousin, I am as heartily glad to see you in

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town as I should be to meet any of my old bottle acquaintance.

Clar. And on my side I am as happy in meeting your worship, as I should be in a rencounter with e'er a petticoat in Christendom.

Rang. And if you have any occasion for a dangling gallant to Vauxhall, Ranelagh, or even the poor neglected Park, you are so unlike the rest of your virtuous sisters of the petticoat, that I will venture myself with you.

Clar. Take care what you promise; for who knows but this face, you were pleas'd to say so many pretty things of before you saw it, may raise so many rivals among your kept mistresses and reps of quality——

Rang. Hold, hold! a truce with your satire, sweet cuz! or, if scandal must be the topic of every virtuous woman's conversation——call for your tea-water, and let it be in it's proper element. Come, your tea, your tea.

Enter Maid.

Clar. With all my heart —— Who's there? Get tea —— Upon condition that you stay till it comes.

Rang. That is according as you behave, Madam.

Clar. O Sir, I am very sensible of the favour.

Rang. Nay, you may, I assure you; for there is but one woman of virtue, besides yourself, I would stay with ten minutes, (and I have not known her above these twelve hours :) the insipidity, or the rancour of their discourse, is insufferable: 'Sdeath! I had rather take the air with my grandmother.

Clar. Ha, ha, ha! the ladies are highly oblig'd to you, I vow.

Rang. I tell you what; the lady I speak of was oblig'd to me, and the generous girl is ready to own it.

Clar. And, pray, when was it you did virtue this considerable service?

Rang. But this last night, the Devil fetch me! a romantic whim of mine convey'd me into her chamber, where I found her, young and beautiful, alone at midnight, dress'd like a soft Adonis, her lovely hair all loose about her shoulders——

Clar. In boy's cloaths! this is worth attending to.

[*Aside.*
Rang.

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Rang. Gad, I no more suspected her being a woman than I did your being my cater-cousin.

Clar. How did you discover it at last?

Rang. Why, faith, she very modestly dropt me a hint of it herself.

Clar. Herself! (If this should be Jacintha!) [*Aside.*

Rang. Ay, 'foregad, did she! which I imagin'd a good sign at midnight. Ha, cousin! so I e'en invented a long story of a passion I had for her, (though I had never seen her before)—you know my old way—and said so many such tender things——

Clar. As you said to me just now.

Rang. Pshaw! quite in another style, I assure you. It was midnight, and I was in a right cue.

Clar. Well! and what did she answer to all these protestations?

Rang. Why, instead of running into my arms at once, as I expected——

Clar. To be sure!

Rang. 'Gad, like a free-hearted honest girl, she frankly told me she lik'd another better than she lik'd me: that I had something in my face that shew'd I was a gentleman; and she would e'en trust herself with me, if I would give her my word I would convey her to her spark.

Clar. O brave! and how did you bear this?

Rang. Why, curse me, if I am ever angry with a woman for not having a passion for me; I only hate your sex's vain pretence of having no passion at all. Gad! I lov'd the good-natur'd girl for it, took her at her word, stole her out of the window, and this morning made a very honest fellow happy in the possession of her.

Clar. And her name is Jacintha.

Rang. Ha!

Clar. Your amours are no secrets, Sir: You see you might as well have told me all the whole of last night's adventure; for you find I know.

Rang. All! why, what do you know?

Clar. Nay, nothing: I only know that a gentleman's hat cannot be dropt in a lady's chamber——

Rang. The Devil!

Clar. But a husband is such an odd, impertinent, awkward creature, that he will be stumbling over it.

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Rang. Here has been fine work! [*Afide.*] But how, in the name of wonder, should you know all this?

Clar. By being in the same house.

Rang. In the same house!

Clar. Ay, in the same house, a witness of the confusion you have made.

Rang. Frankly's Clarinda, by all that's fortunate, it must be so. [*Afide.*]

Clar. And let me tell you, Sir, that even the dull, low-spirited diversions you ridicule in us tame creatures, are preferable to the romantic exploits that only wine can raise you to.

Rang. Yes, cousin! but I'll be even with you.

[*Afide.*]
Clar. If you reflect, cousin, you will find a great deal of wit in shocking a lady's modesty, disturbing her quiet, tainting her reputation, and ruining the peace of a whole family!

Rang. To be sure!

Clar. These are the high-mettled pleasures of you men of spirit, that the insipidity of the virtuous can never arrive at. And can you in reality think your Burgundy, and your Bacchus, your Venus, and your Loves, an excuse for all this? fye, cousin, fye!

Rang. No, cousin.

Clar. What, dumb! I am glad you have modesty enough left not to go about to excuse yourself.

Rang. It is as you say. When we are sober and reflect but ever so little on the follies we commit, we are ashamed and sorry; and yet the very next minute we run again into the very same absurdities.

Clar. What! moralizing, cousin? ha, ha, ha!

Rang. What you know is not half, not a hundredth part of the mischief of my last night's frolic: and yet, the very next petticoat I saw this morning, I must follow it, and be damn'd to me! though, for aught I know, poor Frankly's life may depend upon it.

Clar. Whose life, Sir?

Rang. And here do I stand prating to you now.

Clar. Pray, good cousin, explain yourself.

Rang. Good cousin! She has it. [*Afide.*] Why, whilst I was making off with the wench, Bellamy and he were quarrelling about her: and though Jacintha
and

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and I made all the haste we could, we did not get to them before——

Clar. Before what? (I am frighten'd out of my wits.) [Aside.]

Rang. Not that Frankly car'd three half-pence for the girl.

Clar. But there was no mischief done, I hope?

Rang. Pho! a slight scratch: nothing at all, as the surgeon said, though he was but a queer-looking son of a bitch of a surgeon neither.

Clar. Good God! why he should have the best that can be found in London.

Rang. Ay, indeed, so he should: that was what I was going for when I saw you. [Sits down.] They are all at Jack Meggot's hard by, and you will keep me here.

Clar. I keep you here! for Heaven's sake, be gone.

Rang. Your tea is a damn'd while a coming.

Clar. You shall have no tea now, I assure you.

Rang. Nay, one dish.

Clar. No, positively, you shall not stay!

Rang. Your commands are absolute, Madam. [Going.]

Clar. Then Frankly is true, and I only am to blame.

Rang. [Returns.] But I beg ten thousand pardons, cousin, that I should forget to salute you.

Clar. Pshaw! how can you trifle at such a time as this?

Rang. A trifle! wrong not your beauty.

Clar. Lord! how teasing you are? there.

Rang. [Kisses her.] Poor thing! how uneasy she is! nay, no ceremony. You shall not stir a step with me.

Clar. I do not intend it. This is downright provoking! [Exit Ranger.] Who's there?

Enter Landlady.

Landl. Madam, did your ladyship call?

Clar. Does one Mr. Meggot live in this neighbourhood?

Landl. Yes, Madam, a fine gentleman, and keeps a noble house, and a world of company.

Clar. Very well! I don't want his history. I wonder my servants are not come yet!

Landl. Lack-a-day, Madam, they are all below.

Clar. Send up one then with a card to me. I must know the truth of this affair immediately. [Exit.]

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ACT V. SCENE *a Room in Mr. Strickland's House.*

Mr. and Mrs. Strickland discovered; she weeping, and he writing at a Table.

Mrs. Strick. HEIGH! ho!

Mr. Strick. What can possibly be the occasion of that sigh, Madam? you have yourself agreed to a maintenance, and a maintenance no dutchess need be ashamed of.

Mrs. Strick. But the extremities of provocation that drove me to that agreement——

Mr. Strick. Were the effect of your own follies. Why do you disturb me? [Writes on.]

Mrs. Strick. I would not willingly give you a moment's uneasiness: I but desire a fair and equal hearing; and if I satisfy you not in every point, then abandon me, discard me to the world, and it's malicious tongues.

Mr. Strick. What was it you said?——Damn this pen!

Mrs. Strick. I say, Mr. Strickland, I would only——

Mr. Strick. You would only!——you would only repeat what you have been saying this hour, I am innocent: and when I shew'd you the letter I had taken from your maid, what was then your poor evasion, but that it was to Clarinda, and you were innocent?

Mrs. Strick. Heaven knows I am innocent.

Mr. Strick. But I know your Clarinda, your woman of honour, is your blind, your cover, your——but why do I distract myself about a woman I have no longer any concerns with? Here, Madam, is your fate: a letter to your brother in the country.

Mrs. Strick. Sir——

Mr. Strick. I have told him what a sister he is to receive, and how to bid her welcome.

Mrs. Strick. Then my ruin is compleat. My brother!

Mr. Strick. I must vindicate my own honour, else what will the world say?

Mrs. Strick. That brother was my only hope, my only ground of patience. In his retirement I hoped my name might have been safe, and slept, till by some happy means you might at length have known me innocent, and pitied me.

Mrs.

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Mr. Strick. Retirement! pretty soul! no! no! that face was never made for retirement. It is another sort of retiring you are fitted for—Ha! hark! what's that? [*A knocking at the door.*] Two gentle taps—and why but two! was that the signal, Madam? stir not, on your life.

Mrs. Strick. Give me resolution, Heaven, to bear this usage, and keep it secret from the world. [*Aside.*

Mr. Strick. I will have no signs, no items, no hem to tell him I am here. Ha! another tap. The gentleman is in haste, I find. [*Opens the door, and enter Tester.*] Tester! why did you not come in, rascal? [*Beats him.*] All vexations meet to cross me.

Tester. Lard, Sir, what do you strike me for? my mistress order'd me never to come in where she was, without first knocking at the door.

Mr. Strick. O cunning Devil! Tester is too honest to be trusted.

Mrs. Strick. Unhappy man! will nothing undeceive him? [*Aside.*

Tester. Sir, here is a letter.

Mr. Strick. To my wife?

Tester. No, Sir, to you. The servant waits below.

Mr. Strick. Art sure it is a servant?

Tester. Sir, [*Staring,*] it is Mr. Buckle, Sir.

Mr. Strick. I am mad: I know not what to say, or do, or think. But, let's read. [*Reads to himself.*

S I R,

We cannot bear to reflect that Mrs. Strickland may possibly be ruin'd in your esteem, and in the voice of the world, only by the confusion which our affairs have made in your family, without offering all within our power to clear the misunderstanding between you. If you will give yourself the trouble but to step to Mr. Meggot's, where all parties will be, we doubt not but we can entirely satisfy your most flagrant suspicions, to the honour of Mrs. Strickland, and the quiet of your lives.

Jacintha, John Bellamy.

Hey! here is the whole gang witnessing for one another. They think I am an ass, and will be led by the nose to believe every thing. Call me a chair. [*Exit Tester.*] Yes, I will go to this rendezvous of enemies—I will—and find out all her plots, her artifices and contrivances: it will clear my conduct to her brother, and all her friends.

[*Exit Mr. Strickland.*
Mrs.

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Mrs. Striſt. Gone, ſo abruptly! what can that letter be about? no matter: there is no way left to make us eaſy but by my diſgrace, and I muſt learn to ſuffer. Time and innocence will teach me to bear it patiently.

Enter Lucetta.

Lucet. Mrs. Bellamy, Madam, (for my young lady is married) begs you would follow Mr. Strickland to Mr. Meggot's: ſhe makes no doubt but ſhe ſhall be able to make you and my maſter eaſy.

Mrs. Striſt. But how came ſhe to know any thing of the matter?

Lucet. I have been with them, Madam: I could not bear to ſee ſo good a lady ſo ill treated.

Mrs. Striſt. I am indeed, Lucetta, ill treated; but, I hope, this day will be the laſt of it.

Lucet. Madam Clarinda and Mr. Frankly will be there, and the young gentleman, Madam, who was with you in this room laſt night.

Mrs. Striſt. Ha! if he is there, there may be hopes; and it is worth the trying.

Lucet. Dear lady—Let me call a chair.

Mrs. Striſt. I go with you: I cannot be more wretched than I am. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE *a Room in Meggot's Houſe.*

Enter Frankly, Ranger, Bellamy, Jacintha, and Meggot.

Frank. O Ranger! This is news indeed. Your couſin, and a lady of ſuch fortune!

Rang. I have done the buſineſs for you. I tell you ſhe's your own. She loves you.

Frank. 'Words are too faint to tell the joy I feel.'
"You make my heart dance with joy."

Rang. I have put that heart of her's into ſuch a flutter, that I'll lay a hundred guineas, with the aſſiſtance which this lady had promiſ'd me, I fix her yours directly.

Jacin. Ay, ay, Mr. Frankly, we have a deſign upon her which cannot fail. But you muſt obey orders.

Frank. Moſt willingly. But remember, dear lady, I have more than life at ſtake.

Jacin. Away then into the next room; for ſhe is this inſtant coming hither.

Frank.

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Frank. Hither! you surprize me more and more.

Jacin. Here is a message from her by which she desires leave to wait on me this afternoon.

Rang. Only for the chance of seeing you here, I assure ye.

Frank. Let me hug thee; though I know not how to believe it.

Rang. Pshaw! prithee, do not stifle me! it is a busy day, a very busy day.

Jack Meg. Thou art the most unaccountable creature in life!

Rang. But the most lucky one, Jack, if I succeed for Frankly, as I have for Bellamy, and my heart whispers me I shall. Come in, most noble Mr. Buckle: and what have you to propose?

Enter Buckle.

Buckle. A lady, Madam, in a chair, says her name is Clarinda.

Jacin. Desire her to walk up.

Bella. How could you let her wait? [*Exit Buckle.*] You must excuse him, Madam. Buckle is a true bachelor's servant, and knows no manners.

Jacin. Away, away, Mr. Frankly, and stay till I call you. A rap with my fan shall be the signal. (*Exit Frank.*) We make very free with your house, Mr. Meggot.

Jack Meg. O! you could not oblige me more!

Enter Clarinda.

Clar. Dear Mrs. Bellamy, pity my confusion. I am to wish you joy, and ask your pardon all in a breath. I know not what to say. I am quite ashamed of my last night's behaviour.

Jacin. Come, come, Clarinda, it is all well. All is over and forgot. Mr. Bellamy— [*salute.*]

Clar. I wish you joy, Sir, with all my heart, and should have been very sorry if any folly of mine had prevented it.

Bell. Madam, I am oblig'd to you.

Clar. (*Aside*) I see nothing of Mr. Frankly! My heart misgives me.

Rang. And so, you came hither purely out of friendship, good-nature, and humility.

Clar. Purely.

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Rang. To confess your offences, to beg pardon, and to make reparation.

Clar. Purely. Is this any thing so extraordinary?

Jack Meg. The most so of any thing in life, I think.

Rang. A very whimsical business for so fine a lady, and an errand you seldom went on before, I fancy, my dear cousin.

Jacin. Never, I dare swear, if I may judge by the awkward concern she shews in delivering it.

Clar. Concern! Lard! well, I protest, you are all exceeding pretty company! Being settled for life, Jacintha, gives an ease to the mind, that brightens conversation strangely.

Jacin. I am sorry, with all my heart, you are not in the same condition; for as you are, my dear, you are horridly chagrine.

Rang. But with a little of our help, Madam, the lady may recover, and be very good company.

Clar. Hum! What does he mean, Mr. Bellamy?

Bella. Ask him, Madam.

Clar. Indeed I shall not give myself the trouble.

Jacin. Then you know what he means.

Clar. Something impertinent, I suppose, not worth explaining.

Jacin. It is something you won't let him explain, I find.

Enter Buckle, and whispers Meggot.

Jack Meg. Very well! Desire him to walk into the parlour. Madam, the gentleman is below.

Jacin. Then every one to your post. You know your cues.

Rang. I warrant ye.

[Exeunt gentlemen.]

Clar. All gone! I am glad of it, for I want to speak to you.

Jacin. And I, my dear Clarinda, have something which I do not know how to tell you. But it must be known, sooner or later.

Clar. What's the matter

Jacin. Poor Mr. Frankly—

Clar. You fright me out of my senses!

Jacin. Has no wounds but what you can cure. Ha, ha, ha!

Clar. Pshaw! I am angry.

Jacin.

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Jacin. Pshaw! You are pleas'd—and will be more so, when I tell you, this man, whom Fortune has thrown in your way, is in rank and temper, the man in the world who suits you best for a husband.

Clar. Husband! I say, Husband, indeed! Where will this end! [Aside.

Jacin. His very soul is yours, and he only waits an opportunity of telling you so. He is in the next room. Shall I call him in?

Clar. My dear girl, hold!

Jacin. How foolish is this coyness now, Clarinda? If the men were here indeed, something might be said—And so, Mr. Frankly!

Clar. How can you be so teasing?

Jacin. Nay, I am in downright earnest: and to shew you how particular I have been in my enquiries, 'though I know you have a spirit above regarding the modish, 'paltry way of a *Smithfield* bargain—His fortune—'

Clar. I don't care what his fortune is.

Jacin. Don't you so? Then you are farther gone than I thought you were.

Clar. No, Pshaw; pr'ythee, I don't mean so neither.

Jacin. I don't care what you mean: but you won't like him the worse, I hope, for having a fortune superior to your own. Now shall I call him in?

Clar. Pho, dear girl—some other time.

Jacin. (*raps with her fan*) That's the signal, and here he is. You shall not stir: I positively will leave you together. [Exit *Jacintha*.

Clar. I tremble all over.

Enter Frankly.

Frank. Pardon this freedom, Madam—but I hope our having so luckily met with a common friend in Mrs. Bellamy—

Clar. Sir!

Frank. Makes any farther apology for my behaviour last night absolutely unnecessary.

Clar. So far, Mr. Frankly, that I think the apology should be rather on my side, for the impertinent bustle I made about her.

Frank. This behaviour gives me hopes, Madam: Pardon the construction—But from the little bustle you made about the lady, may I not hope, you was not quite indifferent about the gentleman?

Clar.

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Clar. Have a care of being too sanguine in your hopes : Might not a love of power, or the satisfaction of shewing that power, or the dear pleasure of abusing that power ; might not these have been foundation enough for more than what I did ?

Frank. Charming woman——With most of your sex, I grant, they might, but not with you. Whatever power your beauty gives, your good-nature will allow you no other use of it than to oblige.

Cla. This is the height of compliment, Mr. Frankly.

Frank. Not, in my opinion, I assure you, Madam : and I am now going to put it to the trial.

Clar. (*Aside*) What is he going to say now ?

Frank. (*Aside*) What is it that ails me, that I cannot speak ? Pshaw ! he here !

Enter Ranger.

Clar. Interrupted ! impertinent !

Rang. There is no fight so ridiculous as a pair of your true lovers. Here are you two now, bowing and cringing, and keeping a passion secret from one another, that is no secret to all the house beside. And if you don't make the matter up immediately, it will be all over the town within these two hours.

Clar. What do you mean ?

Frank. Ranger——

Rang. Do you be quiet ; can't ye ? (*Aside.*) But it is over, I suppose, cousin, and you have given him your consent.

Clar. Sir, the liberties you are pleas'd to take with me——

Rang. Oh ! in your airs still, are you ? Why then, Mr. Frankly, there is a certain letter of yours, Sir, to this lady.

Clar. A letter to me !

Rang. Ay ! to you, Madam.

Frank. Ha ! what of that letter ?

Rang. It is only fallen into Mr. Strictland's hands, that is all ; and he has read it !——

Frank. Read it.

Rang. Ay ; read it to all his family at home, and to all the company below : and if some stop be not put to it, it will be read in all the coffee-houses in town.

Frank. A stop ! This sword shall put a stop to it ; or I will perish in the attempt.

Rang.

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Rang. But will that sword put a stop to the talk of the town?—Only make it talk the faster, take my word for it.

Clar. This is all a trick.

Rang. Is it so? you shall soon see that, my fine cousin.
[Exit Ranger.]

Frank. It is but too true, I fear. There is such a letter which I gave Lucetta. Can you forgive me? Was I much to blame, when I could neither see, nor hear of you?

Clar. (Tenderly.) You give yourself, Mr. Frankly, a thousand more uneasinesses than you need about me.

Frank. If this uneasiness but convinces you how much I love you—Interrupted again!

Clar. (Aside.) This is downright malice.

Enter Ranger, followed by Jacintha, Mr. Strickland, Bellamy, and Meggot.

Rang. Enter, enter, gentleman and lady!

Clar. Mr. Strickland here! what is all this?

Rang. Now you shall see whether this is a trick or no.

Jacin. Do not be uneasy, my dear: we will explain it to you.

Frank. I cannot bear this trifling, Ranger, when my heart is on the rack.

Rang. Come this way then, and learn.

[Jacintha, Clarinda, Frankly, and Ranger retire.]

[Mr. Strickland, Bellamy, and Meggot advance.]

Mr. Strick. Why, I know not well what to say. This has a face. This letter may as well agree with Clarinda as with my wife, as you have told the story; and Lucetta explain'd it so—But she for a sixpenny piece would have constru'd it the other way.

Jack Meg. But, Sir, if we produce this Mr. Frankly to you, and he owns himself the author of this letter—

Bella. And if Clarinda likewise be brought before your face to encourage his addresses, there can be no farther room for doubt.

Mr. Strick. No—Let that appear, and I shall—I think I shall be satisfied—But yet it cannot be—

Bella. Why not? Hear me, Sir. [They talk.]

[Jacintha, Clarinda, Frankly, and Ranger advance.]

Jacin. In short, Clarinda, unless the affair is made up directly, a separation, with all the obloquy on her side, must be the consequence.

Clar.

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Clar. Poor Mrs. Strickland, I pity her: but for him, he deserves all he feels were it ten times what it is.

Jacin. It is for her sake only, that we beg of you both to bear his impertinence.

Clar. With all my heart. You will do what you please with me.

Frank. Generous creature!

Mr. Strick. Ha! here she is, and with her the very man I saw deliver the letter to Lucetta—I do begin to fear I have made myself a fool—Now for the proof—Here is a letter, Sir, which has given me great disturbance, and these gentlemen assure me it was writ by you.

Frank. That letter, Sir, upon my honour, I left this morning with Lucetta, for this lady.

Mr. Strick. For that lady! and Frankly, the name at the bottom, is not feign'd, but your real name?

Frank. Frankly is my name.

Mr. Strick. I see, I feel myself ridiculous.

Jacin. Now, Mr. Strickland—I hope —

Jack Meg. Ay! ay! a clear case.

Mr. Strick. I am satisfied, and will go this instant to Mrs. Strickland.

Rang. Why then the devil fetch me, if this would satisfy me.

Mr. Strick. What's that?

Rang. Nay, nothing: it is no affair of mine.

Bella. What do you mean, Ranger?

Mr. Strick. Ay, what do you mean? I will know before I stir.

Rang. With all my heart, Sir. Cannot you see that all this may be a concerted matter between them?

Frank. Ranger, you know I can resent.

Mr. Strick. Go on—I will defend you, let who will resent it.

Rang. Why then, Sir, I declare myself your friend: and were I as you—nothing but their immediate marriage should convince me.

Mr. Strick. Sir, you're right, and are my friend indeed. Give me your hand.

Rang. Nay, were I to hear her say, I, Clarinda, take thee, Charles, I would not believe them till I saw them a-bed together. Now resent it as you will.

Mr. Strick. Ay, Sir, as you will. But nothing less shall

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shall convince me; and so, my fine lady, if you are in earnest——

Clar. Sure, Mr. Strickland——

Mr. Strick. Nay, no flouncing! You cannot escape.

Rang. Why, Frankly, has't no soul?

Frank. I pity her confusion.

Rang. Pity her confusion!—the man's a fool—Here, take her hand——

Frank. Thus on my knees then, let me ravish with your hand, your heart.

Clar. Ravish it you cannot; for it is with all my heart I give it you.

Mr. Strick. I am satisfied.

Clar. And so am I, now it once is over.

Rang. And so am I, my dainty cousin—And I wish you joy of a man, your whole sex would go to cuffs for, if they knew him but half so well as I do—Ha! She here! This is more than I bargain'd for. [*Aside.*

Jacintha leads in Mrs. Strickland.

Mr. Strick. (*Embracing Mrs. Strickland.*) Madam, reproach me not with my folly, and you shall never hear of it again.

Mrs. Strick. Reproach you, no! if ever you hear the least reflection pass my lips, forsake me in that instant; or, what would yet be worse, suspect again.

Mr. Strick. It is enough. I am ashamed to talk to thee.—This letter which I wrote to your brother, thus I tear in pieces, and with it part for ever with my jealousy.

Mrs. Strick. This is a joy, indeed! as great as unexpected. Yet there is one thing wanting to make it lasting.

Rang. What the devil is coming now? [*Aside.*

Mrs. Strick. Be assured, every other suspicion of me was as unjust as your last; though perhaps you had more foundations for your fears.

Rang. She won't tell, sure, for her own sake. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Strick. All must be cleared before my heart will be at ease.

Rang. It looks plaguy like it, though! [*Aside.*

Mr. Strick. What mean you? I am all attention.

Mrs. Strick. There was a man, as you suspected, in my chamber last night.

Mr. Strick. Ha! take care, I shall relapse.

Mrs. Strick. That gentleman was he——

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Rang. Here is a devil for you!

[*Aside.*

Mrs. Strick. Let him explain the rest.

Rang. A frolic! a mere frolic! on my life.

Mr. Strick. A frolic! Zounds!

[*They interpose.*

Rang. Nay, don't let us quarrel the very moment you declar'd yourself my friend. There was no harm done, I promise you. Nay, never frown. After I have told my story, any satisfaction you are pleas'd to ask I shall be ready to give.

Mr. Strick. Be quick then, and ease me of my pain.

Rang. Why then, as I was strolling about last night—upon the look out, I must confess—Chance, and chance only convey'd me to your house; where I espied a ladder of ropes most invitingly fasten'd to the window.

Jacin. Which ladder I had fasten'd for my escape.

Mr. Strick. Proceed.

Rang. Up mounted I, and up I should have gone, if it had been in the garret. I open'd one door, then another, and, to my great surprize, the whole house was silent. At last I stole into a room where this lady was undressing.

Mr. Strick. 'Sdeath and the devil! you did not dare, sure—

Rang. I don't know whether I had dared or no, if I had not heard the maid say something of her master's being jealous. Oh!—Damn me, thought I, then the work is half done to my hands.

Jacin. Do you mind that, Mr. Strickland?

Mr. Strick. I do—I do, most feelingly.

Rang. The maid grew saucy, and most conveniently to my wishes, was turn'd out of the room; and if you had not the best wife in the world—

Mr. Strick. Ounds! Sir, but what right have you—

Rang. What right, Sir! if you will be jealous of your wife without a cause; if you will be out at that time of night, when you might have been so much better employ'd at home, we young fellows think we have a right—

Mr. Strick. No joking, I beseech you. You know not what I feel.

Rang. Then seriously, I was mad or drunk enough, call it which you will, to be very rude to this lady; for which I ask both her pardon and yours. I am an odd sort of a fellow, perhaps; but I am above telling you or any man a lie, damn me, if I am not.

Mr.

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Mr. Strict. I must, I cannot but believe you; and for the future, Madam, you shall find a heart ready to love and trust you. No tears, I beg: I cannot bear them.

Mrs. Strict. I cannot speak, and yet there is a favour, Sir——

Mr. Strict. I understand you——and, as a proof of the sincerity with which I speak, I beg it as a favour of this lady in particular [*to Clarinda*] and of all the company in general, to return to my house immediately: where every thing, Mr. Bellamy, shall be settled to your entire satisfaction——No thanks; I have not deserv'd them.

Jack Meg. I beg your pardon, Sir, the fiddles are ready. Mrs. Bellamy has promis'd me her hand, and I won't part with one of you till midnight; and if you are as well satisfied as you pretend to be, let our friend Rattle here begin the ball with Mrs. Strictland; for he seems to be the hero of the day.

Mr. Strict. As you and the company please.

Rang. Why, this is honest. Continue but in this humour, and faith! Sir, you may trust me to run about your house like a spaniel—I cannot sufficiently admire at the whimsicalness of my good fortune, in being so instrumental to this general happiness——Bellamy, Frankly, I wish you joy with all my heart, (though I had rather you should be married than I, for all that.) Never did Matrimony appear to me with a smile upon her face 'till this instant.

*Sure joys for ever wait each happy pair,
When sense the man, and virtue crowns the fair;
And kind compliance proves their mutual care.* }

[A dance.]

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Rang. Here is a devil for you ! *[Aside.*

Mrs. Strick. Let him explain the rest.

Rang. A frolic ! a mere frolic ! on my life.

Mr. Strick. A frolic ! Zounds ! *[They interpose.*

Rang. Nay, don't let us quarrel the very moment you declar'd yourself my friend. There was no harm done, I promise you. Nay, never frown. After I have told my story, any satisfaction you are pleas'd to ask I shall be ready to give.

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Mr.

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*Sure joys for ever wait each happy pair,
When sense the man, and virtue crowns the fair;
And kind compliance proves their mutual care.* }

[A dance.

E P I L O G U E

Written by Mr. GARRICK



TH^O the young smarts, I see, begin to sneer,
 And the old sinners cast a wicked leer :
 Be not alarm'd, ye fair—you've nought to fear.
 No wanton hint, no loose ambiguous sense,
 Shall flatter vicious taste at your expence.
 Leaving, for once, these shameless arts in vogue,
 We give a Fable for the Epilogue.

An Ass there was, our Author bade me say,
 Who needs must write—he did—and wrote a Play.
 The parts were cast to various beasts and fowl ;
 The stage a barn—the manager an Owl.
 The house was cram'd at six, with friends and foes ;
 Rakes, wits, and critics, citizens, and beaux.
 These characters appear'd in different shapes
 Of tigers, foxes, horses, bulls, and apes ;
 With others too, of lower rank and station—
 A perfect abstract of the brute creation.
 Each, as he felt, mark'd out the Author's faults,
 And thus the Connoisseurs express'd their thoughts.
 The Critic-curs first snarl'd—The rules are broke,
 Time, place, and action, sacrific'd to joke.
 The Goats cry'd out, 'Twas formal, dull, and chaste—
 Not writ for beasts of gallantry and taste.
 The Horned-Cattle were in piteous taking,
 At fornication, rapes, and cuckold-making.
 The Tigers swore, He wanted fire and passion ;
 The Apes condemn'd—because it was the fashion.
 The generous Steeds allow'd him proper merit :
 Here mark'd his faults, and there approv'd his spirit.
 While Brother-Bards bray'd forth with usual spleen,
 And, as they heard, exploded every scene.
 When Reynard's thoughts were ask'd, the shrugging sage,
 Fam'd for hypocrisy, and worn with age,
 Condemn'd the shameless licence of the stage.
 At which the Monkey skip'd from box to box,
 And whisper'd round the judgment of the Fox ;
 Abus'd the Moderns ; talk'd of Rome and Greece ;
 Bilk'd ev'ry box-keeper ; and damn'd the piece.
 Now, ev'ry fable has a moral to't—
 Be churchman, statesman, any thing—but poet.
 In law, or physic, quack in what you will ;
 Cant and grimace conceal the want of skill ;
 Secure in these, his gravity may pass—
 But here no artifice can hide the Ass.

